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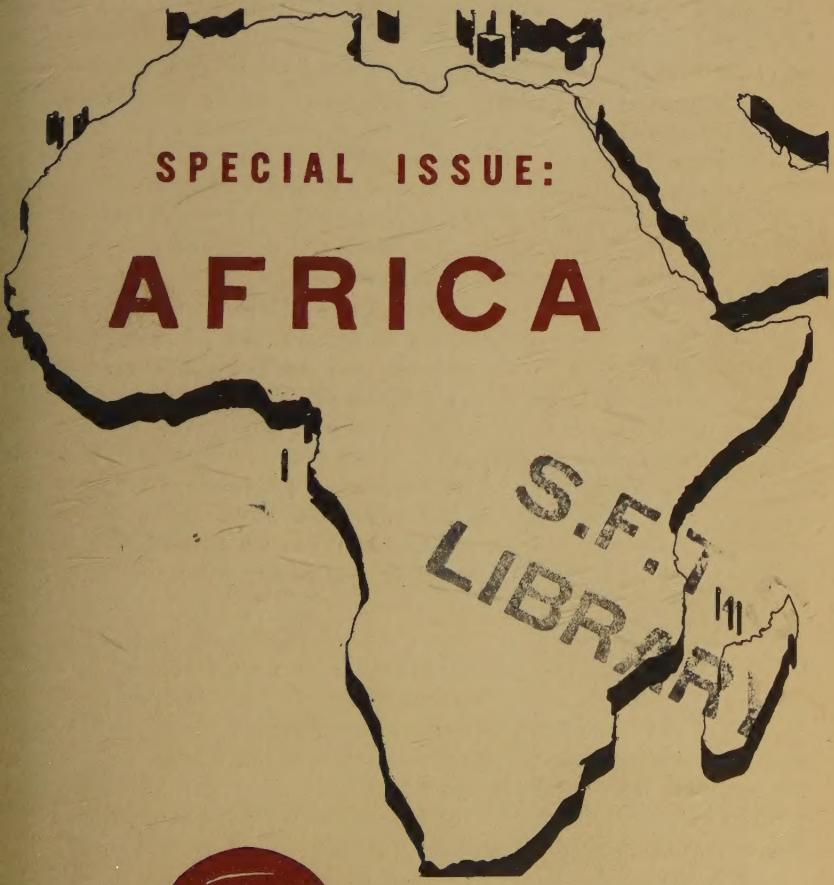
SPECIAL ISSUE:

AFRICA



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EDITORIAL:

THE DOUBLY UNKNOWN

THIS is the fourth special issue of TOMORROW. Previously we offer our readers regional issues on Haiti (Autumn 1954), Asia (Autur 1955), and on the North American Indian (Spring 1956); future regior issues are to cover Latin America, the Near East, and other areas.

In a number of respects, this issue is of unique significance. W its unconscious arrogance, our civilization now looks upon the Afric Continent as something new—something that has just flashed across vision of world history! We are made to understand that only yesterd this was terra incognita, hardly a fitting subject even for the curios of the learned. Today, Africa has become a destination for diploma geologists and various international missions.

With this air of discovery goes a paternalistic attitude toward Afri and Africans that is difficult to tolerate, and should certainly not encouraged. Nothing in this special issue of TOMORROW may serve deepen the impression that the African Continent is a mere mosaic strange tribal societies, with ways and mores alien to Western ma As a review of psychical research, TOMORROW has set itself the spec task of throwing a spotlight on supposedly paranormal elements in societies; on a Pacific island, a Midwestern farm, a Scottish village or a jungle clearing in Central Africa. What we find in Africa, I fe is not something exotic and startling, but rather the remnant or mir of our past.

THE great and ancient African kingdoms were cradles of cultu and civilizations that may have rivaled those of Hellas and Ro as well as our own. Written records are scarce but oral traditions a racial memories suggest impressive historic accomplishments. Yet, th are not mere monuments to a dead past. In our time, Africa has tau the rest of the world much that is fundamental; it has guarded anci flames that illuminate the recesses of man's soul.

This realization was well stated by Colonel Laurens van der P author of *Venture to the Interior* and other books on Africa. In an add before a joint meeting of the C. G. Jung Institute and the Psycholog Club in Zurich, Col. van der Post said three years ago that "it is

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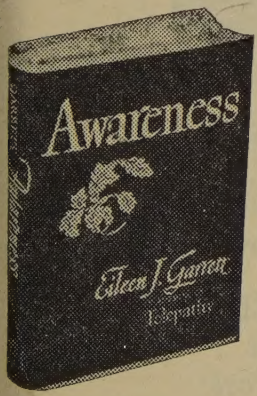

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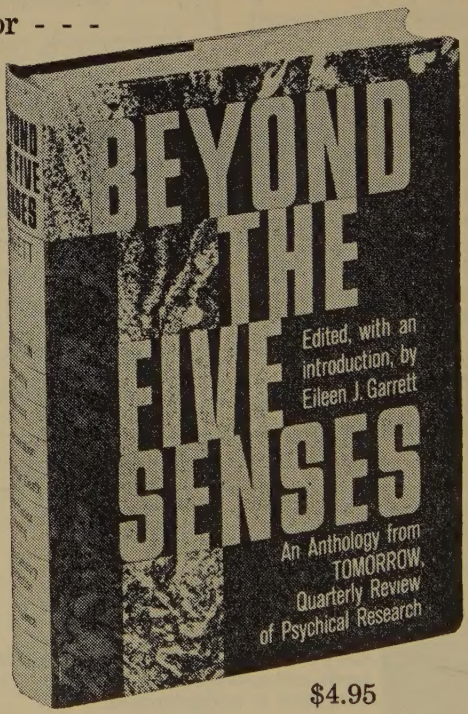
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Watutsi (*or Tutsi*), Ruanda Urundi; *Wum*, British Cameroons; *Zulu*, Natal, Union
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Quarterly Review of Psychical Research

TOMORROW

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E. E. Evans-Pritchard

A SEANCE AMONG THE AZANDE

FROM 1926 to 1930 I made three expeditions to Zandeland where I lived for twenty months. As I watched the Zande carry out the many economic and social tasks of day-to-day existence I was amazed at the extensive part of their life which is given over to oracles, magic and other ritual performances. I did not need to search for mystical notions

and ritual practices. I found daily evidence of them in ceremonies, quarrels, legal cases, and other social situations.

The Azande are a negroid people who live on the Nile-Congo divide. Their culture has an immense area of extension comprising regions under three European administrations, Anglo-Egyptian, French and Belgian. They represent an amalgam of many tribes, at one time possessed of their own separate languages and institutions which were absorbed by the dominant Mbomu culture during the last two centuries. The Zande empire was split into a number of kingdoms founded by adventurous princes who preferred to carve out domains for themselves rather than remain in feudal subjection to father or brother. Each king rules over a tribe, a population which maintains peace within its border. Each kingdom is separated from the next by a wide fringe of unpopulated brush.

Family life within the tribes is characterized by inferiority of women and authority of elders. Azande have no knowledge of cattle, nor, indeed, would cattle exist in their country because of deadly sleeping sickness. The Zande lives within his environmental and cultural limits, hoeing his gardens, hunting, paying his visits to court, pursuing litigation, quarrelling with his neighbors, dancing, and fulfilling each day his obligation as subject, father, husband, son, brother and so on.

The Soul of Witchcraft

AZANDE believe that some people are witches and can injure them in virtue of an inherent quality. A witch performs no rite utters no spell, and possesses no medicines. An act of witchcraft is a psychic act. I had no difficulty in discovering what Azande think about witchcraft, nor in observing what they do to combat it. Their ideas and actions are on the surface of their life and are accessible to any one who lives for a few weeks in their homesteads. Every Zande is an authority on witchcraft. There is not even need to question Azande about it, for information flows freely from recurrent situations in their social life, and one has only to watch and listen. Mangu-witchcraft, was one of the first words I heard in Zandeland, and I heard it uttered day by day throughout the months. Azande believe that witchcraft is a substance in the bodies of witches, a belief found among many peoples in Central and West Africa. It is difficult to say with what organ the Azande associate witchcraft. I have never seen human witchcraft-substance, but it has been described to me as an oval, blackish swelling or bag in which various small objects are sometimes found. A witch shows no external symptoms of his condition.

Witchcraft is not only a physical rait but it is also inherited. It is ransmitted by unilinear descent rom parent to child. Men and romen are equally witches. While itchcraft substance itself is part f the human organism, its action psychic. What Azande call ibisimo mangu, the soul of witchraft, is a concept that bridges over ne distance between the person f the witch and the person of his ictim. The soul of witchcraft may eave its corporeal home at any me during the night, but the zande generally think of a witch ending his soul on errands by ight when his victim is asleep. It ails through the air emitting a right light. During the daytime his light can only be seen by vitches, and by witchdoctors when ney are primed with medicines, ut anyone may have the rare misortune to observe it by night. The light is not the witch in person talking his prey but an emanation rom his body.

The Light in the Garden

I have only once seen witchcraft on its path. I had been sitting ate in my hut writing notes. About idnight, before retiring, I took a pear and went for my usual nocurnal stroll. I was walking in the arden at the back of my hut, mong the banana trees when I oticed a bright light passing at ne back of my servant's hut toward the homestead of a man called Tupoi. As this seemed worth investigation I followed its passage until a grass screen obscured the view. I ran quickly through my hut to the other side in order to see where the light was going, but I could not regain sight of it. I knew that only one man, a member of my household had a lamp that might have given off so bright a light, but next morning he told me that he had neither been out late at night nor had he used his lamp. Shortly afterwards, on the same morning an old relative of Tupoi and an inmate of his homestead died. This event fully explained the light I had seen. I never discovered its real origin, which was possibly a handful of grass lit by someone on his way to defecate, but the coincidence of the direction along which the light moved and the subsequent death accorded well with Zande ideas.

In speaking of witches and witchcraft it is necessary to explain that Azande normally think of witchcraft quite impersonally and apart from any particular witch or witches. When a Zande says about a mishap, "It is witchcraft," he means that it is due to a witch but he does not know to which particular one. Since Azande believe that witches may at any time bring sickness and death upon them they are anxious to establish and maintain contact with these evil powers and by counteracting them control their own destiny. Although

they may at any moment be struck down by witchcraft they do not despair. Far from being gloomy, all observers have described Azande as a cheerful people who are always laughing and joking. For Azande need not live in continual dread of witchcraft since they can enter into relations with it and thereby control it by means of oracles and magic. By oracles they can foresee future dispositions of witchcraft and change them before they develop. By magic they can guard themselves against witchcraft and destroy it.

The Seance is called

THE Zande witch-doctor is both diviner and magician. As diviner he exposes witches; as magician he thwarts them. A European in Zandeland is likely to come across witch-doctors for the first time at a seance, at which they dance and divine, because seances are held in public and are heralded and accompanied by drums.

Seances are held on a variety of occasions but generally at the request of a householder who is suffering or who fears a misfortune. Perhaps he or his wife is ill or he fears his children will sicken. Perhaps his hunting is consistently unsuccessful or he wants to know where in the bush he is likely to find animals. Perhaps blight has begun to mar his ground-nuts or he is merely uncertain where to sow his eleusine (a plant of the grass family which is one of the principal crops of the Zande. Perhaps his wife has not given him a child or he feels that some one is about to speak ill of him to his father-in-law.

One meets witch-doctors as they proceed by ones or twos towards a troubled homestead, each wearing his hat decorated with feathers and carrying his large hide bag containing skins, horns, magic whistles, belts, leglets and armlets made from various wild fruits, and seeds. Today most settlements can muster half a dozen witch-doctors while occasionally at popular seances, and when a new magician is being initiated into the corporation, as many as a dozen will assist.

When they meet at their destination they exchange greetings and discuss in low tones among themselves the affairs of the seance while preparing the ground for dancing. In these conversations and preparations the lead is taken by an experienced magician who has generally been a witch-doctor for longer period than the others, and who may have initiated many of the other performers into the craft. His authority is not great.

Members of the ruling class never, to my knowledge, become practitioners. A noble would at once lose prestige by associating with commoners at their joint meals of medicine and public dances.

quipment for the dance

PREPARATIONS for a dance consist in marking out an area f operations and, when that has een done, of robing. Starting om the drums, a large circle is rawn on the ground, and this is enerally made more conspicuous y white ashes being sprinkled ong it. No layman is supposed to nter into this circle reserved for he witch-doctor's dance, and were e to do so he would risk having a lack-beetle or piece of bone shot to his body by an outraged agician. Each practitioner, hav-g unslung from his shoulder his ather bag, produces from it a umber of horns of waterbuck, ushbuck, dik-dik, bongo, and her animals, and thrusts these the earth along the circular h-line. On one of these straight-ned horns often rests a pot of ater into which witch-doctors aze in order to see witchcraft. nterspersed among the horns are harled pieces of magical wood, nd from both these and the orns magical whistles sometimes angle. The place where his horns re stuck in the earth and the ace in front of them are regarded y a witch-doctor as his own articular field of operations upon hich he will resent encroachment y any other witch-doctor.

The horns, straightened out by eing heated in the fire and bent, hile hot, on the ground, are filled with a paste, made from ashes and juices of various herbs and shrubs mixed with oil, and they are replenished from time to time when the supply is running short or becoming dry. These medicines have great importance, for knowledge of the medicines means knowledge of the art of a witch-doctor. It is not magic words nor ritual sequences which are stressed in initiation into the corporation of witch-doctors, but trees and herbs. A Zande witch-doctor is essentially a man who knows what plants and trees compose the medicines which, if eaten, will give him power to see witchcraft with his own eyes, to know where it resides, and to drive it away from its intended victims. The Zande witch-doctor exercises supernatural powers solely because he knows the right medicines and has eaten them in the right manner. His prophecies are derived from the magic inside him. His inspiration does not spring from the Supreme Being nor from the ghosts of the dead. He relies on medicines for visions of witchcraft and for indications of direction.

In their hands they hold rattles, iron bells attached to wooden handles, and they shake these up and down in the performance. As he dances, each witch-doctor is in himself a complete orchestra, which rattles and rings and bangs to the rhythm of the drums.

Role of the Spectator

BESIDES the witch-doctors there are many other people present at a seance, and we may refer to them according to their functions as spectators, drummers, and chorus of boys. Men and boys sit under a tree or granary near the drums. Women sit in another part of the homestead a long way removed from the men, for men and women never sit together in public. Seances are generally well attended by the neighborhood, some people coming with questions to be put to the witch-doctors, others coming to hear local scandal and to look at the dancing.

Those who wish to put questions to the witch-doctors bring small presents with them in order to place them before the man of whose oracular powers they desire to make use. These presents include small knives, rings, piastres and half-piastres, but consist most commonly of small heaps of eleusine and bundles of maize-heads and bowls of sweet potatoes.

The host has to provide gong and drums, and since it is only here and there that one finds a household possessing these instruments he will almost certainly have to spend a part of the morning borrowing them. He also has to supervise the various household arrangements consequent upon a visit of witch-doctors. If there are only one or two magicians a generous householder will entertain them by a meal and will probably ask a few of the more influential spectators as well. He must prepare a few small presents for the witch-doctors as a reward for their service when the afternoon's work is over. He spends most of the afternoon sitting with his guests.

Drummers are not specially summoned, but are recruited among youths and boys on the spot. They are chosen, if selected at all, for their ability in the art, but generally there is no choice of drummers, and he who can first get possession of an instrument plays it. There is often much competition among boys and youths to act the part of drummer, so that squabbles sometimes result.

Before commencing to dance and sing, witch-doctors often order out of the crowd of spectators all the small boys and range them on the ground near the drums to back up their songs. Every one in the crowd to some extent backs up the songs of the performers, but these boys may be considered as constituting a special chorus and they are placed for this purpose where they can easily be seen by the witch-doctors and admonished if they are not singing lustily enough. If a magician is annoyed with them he will shoot a bone or black-beetle into one of the boys and then extract it to show what he can do if he is really exasperated by their slackness.

Weird and Intoxicating

A seance consists of a witch-doctor or witch-doctors dancing and singing in accompaniment to drums and gong and answering questions put to them by spectators. It takes some time before the performers are warmed up. They commence slowly with sedate hops and then gather momentum, leaping and whirling with remarkable agility and force. Weighted down with excessive clothing and exposed to the full glare of the sun, perspiration pours off them. After a short dance one of them rushes up to the drums and shakes his hand-bells at them to stop. When they cease he lectures the drummers and tells them that they must beat the drums better than that. They commence again. Drums and gong resound, hand-bells, go *wia wia*, wooden bells strung round waists clatter, and anklets click in a confusion of sound but with a rhythmic pattern since the dancers move hands, legs, and trunks to the beat of gong and drums. One of the witch-doctors goes over to the drummers and orders them to cease beating. He faces the crowd and harangues them, especially the chorus of boys: "Why are you not backing up my songs properly, everyone must sing the chorus; if I see any one slacking I will injure him with my magic; I will seize him as a witch. Now, does every one hear what I am saying?" Always there are such preliminaries before the witch-doctors commence to reveal hidden things.

They begin to sing and dance again. One magician performs at a time in front of the drums, leaping and turning with his full vigor, while the others keep their positions in a row behind him, dancing with less violence and supporting his songs. Sometimes two or three of them will advance together up to the drums and give a joint performance. When a member of the audience wishes to put a question he or she puts it to a particular witch-doctor who responds by dancing alone up to the drums and there giving a spirited solo performance. When he is so out of breath that he can dance no longer he shakes his hand-bells at the drummers for them to cease beating, and he doubles up his body to regain breath, or stumbles about the place as though intoxicated. This is the moment for giving an oracular reply to the question put to him. Usually he commences to do this in a far-off voice and with faltering speech. It appears as though the words come to him from without and that he has difficulty in hearing and transmitting them. As he proceeds with his utterances the witch-doctor begins to throw off his air of semi-consciousness and to give forth his revelations with assurance, and eventually with truculence. When he has finished what he has to say he dances again to obtain further

knowledge of the matter about which he is being questioned, since full information may not have come to him during his first dance, or he may dance to another question if he considers that he has satisfactorily dealt with the first one.

Sometimes at these meetings the performers dance themselves into a state of fury and gash their tongues and chests with knives. I have seen men in a state of wild excitement, drunk with the intoxicating orchestral music of drums and gong, bells and rattles, throw back their heads and gash their chests with knives, until blood poured in streams down their bodies. Others cut their tongues and blood mixed with saliva foamed at the corners of their lips and trickled down their chins where it was carried away in a flow of sweat. When they have cut their tongues they dance with them hanging out of their mouths to show their art. They put on ferocious airs, enlarge the whites of their eyes, and open their mouths into grimaces as though contortions, due to great physical tension and exhaustion, were not gruesome enough.

The dance of Zande witch-doctors is one of the few performances I have witnessed in Africa which really comes up to the standards of sensational journalism. It is weird and intoxicating. Seen as a whole it is a picturesque perform-

ance, but it is only by dissecting i and making a careful analysis of it parts that we can discover th meaning of all this fury and gro tesque expression.

Rudeness Ignored

THE witch-doctor functions a these seances not only as a oracular agent but also as a fighte against witch-craft, so that he ca not only tell a person in which direc tion he must look for the witc who is injuring him and what step he may take to counteract the in fluence of witchcraft, but als by his dances he wages immediat war on witches and may succeed in driving them from his patient so that, by showing them he i aware of their identity they ar scared for ever from his homestead But I believe that the first of thes reasons, the desire to enhance one' reputation by giving a public enter tainment, is the most important To those present a seance is a ver good show which is amusing t watch, now and again excitin and always provides material fo comment and gossip for a long tim after.

Special notice should be taken o the manner in which a witc doctor makes his declarations. The have two main modes of utterance and both differ from the speec forms of everyday life. The first one of truculence. They are ove bearing with their audiences. The

ssert themselves in an overweening
anner, browbeating drummers,
orus of boys, and spectators alike,
lling them to stop talking, order-
g them to sit down, admonishing
em sharply to pay attention,
nd so on. No one takes offence at
hat would, on other occasions, be
nsidered unpardonable rudeness.
he same blatant confidence envel-
s their oracular utterances, which
ey accompany with all sorts of
ramatic gestures and extravagant
ses, abandoning ordinary speech
r the braggart tones of a diviner
nbued with powerful magic from
hich are derived words which
nnot be doubted. They impress
eir revelations on their hearers
ith assurance and much repeti-
on.

When they drop their over-
earing attitude they lapse into
nes even more abnormal. After a
irited dance they disclose secrets
prophesy in the voice of a
edium who sees and hears some-
ing from without. They deliver
ese psychic messages in dis-
nnected sentences, often a string
separate words not strung to-
ether grammatically, in a dreamy,
r-away voice. They speak with
fficulty, like men talking in a
ance, or like men talking in their
ep. This, as we shall see later, is
ly partly a pose, for it is also
part a product of physical ex-
austion and of faith in their
edicines.

The Aid of Scandal

HOW does this mode of delivery affect the content of their utterances? Their revelations and prophecies are based on a knowledge of local scandal. In Zande belief the possession of witchcraft gives a man power to harm his fellows but is not the motive of crime. The drive behind all acts of witchcraft is to be looked for in emotions and sentiments common to all men—malice, jealousy, greed, envy, backbiting, slander, and so on. Witches are consequently your personal enemies, and if some misfortune befalls you, you at once run through in your mind as possible witches the names of those with whom you are on bad terms. Now the scandal of native society is largely common property, and witch-doctors, being recruited from the neighborhood, are well informed about local enmities and squabbles. A witch-doctor who is on a visit from a distant province will take advice on these matters from local witch-doctors before and during a seance. Therefore, when a man asks them to account for some sickness or misfortune which has befallen him they will produce as the cause of the trouble the name of some one who bears their questioner ill will, or whom their questioner imagines to bear him ill will. A witch-doctor divines successfully because he says what his listener wishes him to say, and because he uses tact.

It is fairly easy for the witch-doctor, because there are a number of stock enmities in Zande culture: between neighbors, because they have a greater number of contacts and hence more opportunities for quarrelling than those whose homesteads are separated by considerable distances; between wives, because it is a commonplace among Azande that the polygamous family spells friction among its members; and between courtiers, whose political ambitions are bound to clash. A witch-doctor asks his client for the names of his neighbors, wives, or fellow-courtiers as the case may be. He then dances with the names of these people in mind and discloses one of them, if possible by implication rather than directly, as witch. It is erroneous to suppo that a witch-doctor guesses at ra dom the name of a witch. Th would be absurd from the Zand viewpoint, since a grudge of so kind is an essential motive an act of witchcraft. On the co trary, he takes the names of number of people who wish h client ill or who have reason f wishing him ill, and decides means of his magic who of the have the power to injure him a are exercising it; that is, those w have witchcraft-substance in the bellies.

It is important to note h witch-doctors produce their revel tions. As we have already seen, practitioner does not simply answ questions as they are put to hi but goes through a long rigmaro first, so long, in fact, that it oft takes him from midday to suns before the question is finally a swered. First of all he cross-examin his client. He may want to kn the names of his neighbors or wiv or of those who took part in so activity with him. These names a put forward by the client and n by the witch-doctor himself a therefore involve selection on client's part.

Verdict at Sun-down

THE witch-doctor also gets listeners into a suitable fra of mind for receiving his reve tions by lavish use of professio

ogmatism. Having obtained from is client a number of names, e says he will dance to them. fter his first two or three dances e repeats, rather than answers, ne question put to him, assuring is client that he will discover verything before long. He struts bout telling his audience that ney will hear the truth today ecause he has powerful magic hich cannot fail him, and he ill remind them of earlier proph-cies which have been fulfilled. fter another bout of dancing he ives a partial answer couched in a egative form. If it is a question bout sickness of a child he will tell ne father that two of his wives are ot responsible and that he will ance to the others. If it is a ques-on about a bad crop of some food lant he will assure the owner f the gardens that those neighbors f his who live in a certain direction om his homestead are not res-onsible, but that he will now ance to the other directions. hus I have witnessed witch-octors dance for half a day about question of unsuccessful hunting. fter dancing for a long time they nformed the owner of the hunting rea (myself) that they had dis-overed that it was neither the omen nor the young men who ere spoiling the sport, and that ney would surely ferret out the real ulprit before sunset. They danced gain, and at the end of the ance they gave the information that those responsible were certainly married men. Later in the day they said that the same witchcraft which had ruined hunting the year before still hung over the hunting area, so that those married men who had entered the district since could at once be exonerated. After further dancing they stopped the drums and announced, without giving their names, that they had discovered three men responsible for the bad hunting. They danced again and told their audience that they had discovered a fourth culprit and that they had ascertained that there were no others besides these four men. Towards evening they divulged that the reason that these four men used witchcraft to injure hunting was that the year before they had not been asked to take part in the activity. It was this which had first occasioned their envy. It was not till after the sun had gone down that they whispered the names of those responsible to their client, this being the usual procedure at court.

As a witch-doctor brings out his revelations bit by bit, at first, almost as suggestions, even inquiries, he watches carefully his interlocutor to observe whether his answer is in accordance with the questioner's own suspicions. He becomes more definite when he is assured on this point.

I have said that a witch-doctor is successful because he reveals what his inquirer hopes that he

will reveal and because he is tactful. A witch-doctor very seldom accuses a member of the aristocracy of witchcraft, just as a commoner does not consult oracles about them. He may give an important prince information about attempts to use sorcery against him by members of his family or clan, but he does not suggest that they are witches. Princes, however jealous of each other they may be, always maintain class solidarity in opposition to their subjects and do not allow commoners to bring contempt upon any of their relatives.

Cunning vs. Intuition

WITCH-DOCTORS often divulge names of witches to ordinary clients in privacy after the seance has ended and the spectators have returned to their homesteads. In public they try to avoid direct statements and, above all, to keep clear of names. It is only when denouncing women and weak people that they are less scrupulous about mentioning names in public. It must be remembered that, apart from the possibility of an immediate scene, a witch-doctor is on other occasions an ordinary citizen and has to live in close daily contact with his neighbors, and therefore has no desire to alienate them by a public insult. Also, we must not forget that witch-doctors believe in witches quite as firmly as a layman. It is true that while dancing at a seance they are safe, since they a well primed with medicines ar are on the alert against attac but when they are unprotecte and off their guard they may easi succumb to a witch who desir to avenge public exposure.

There are sure to be witch among the audience, and the naturally hate the witch-docto who are on their track. The try to make their feet heavy that they become easily tire and cannot dance well. They t to spoil their songs by preventi people from backing up the chorus. They try to confuse th drummers so that they fail correlate their beats with th rhythm of song and dance. Mo of all, they attempt to bemu the performers so that they cann divine correctly. The practitione dance with all their might agai these witches and utter spells agai them, and if seriously annoyed m even shoot pieces of bone in their bodies and afterwards extra them in order to show everyo that they are alert.

It is not difficult to see that witch-doctor's revelations are larg ly based on local scandal, a that to some extent he thin out his answers to questions wh dancing and strutting abo Azande are aware of this fact. have attended too many seances have any doubt about the cunni of witch-doctors.

Nevertheless, I feel strongly th

e must allow the Zande witch-
octor a measure of intuition and
ot attribute his utterances solely
his reason. The witch-doctor
id his client consciously select
etween them a number of persons
kely to have caused sickness or
ss. The witch-doctor then com-
ences to dance with the names of
ese persons in his memory until
is able to decide who of them are
juring his clients, and I believe
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logic. If you ask a Zande, lay-
an or practitioner, he will tell
ou that the witch-doctor begins to
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ur likely persons in his mind, and
at he dances to these people and
es on dancing until the medi-
nes which he has previously eaten
oduce in him a realization of
tchcraft in one of them. It is
deed almost impossible to be
ore explicit, but I am convinced
at they select one of the names
rough what is largely unconscious
ental activity. In the first place,
ey dance themselves into a con-
tion bordering on dissociation.
ney are intoxicated with music
eated by themselves and others
d are physically prostrated. As
as I can gather from what witch-
octors have told me, they keep the
mes in their memory and repeat
em now and again, but other-
se allow their minds to become a
mplete blank. Suddenly one of
e persons to whom he is dancing
obtrudes himself upon the witch-doctor's consciousness, sometimes as a visual image, but generally by an association of the idea and name of the witch with a physiological disturbance, chiefly in a sudden quickening of the heart-beats, which begin to pulsate violently, pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat. My informant Kamanga, after he became a witch-doctor, described to me what happens in the following words:

> 'A witch-doctor dances and begins to see men with his eyes; his eyes see a certain man and his heart shakes about him. He dances the dance of divination again in order to consider him further, and his heart shakes and shakes about him. For this reason a witch-doctor knows that that man is a witch. When the medicines take hold of him a man begins to dance with reference to some one. He dances in vain and goes in the soul of the medicine and arrives at another man. He sees him and his heart cools about that man. The witch-doctor says to himself: that man does not bewitch people. If he sees witchcraft in the direction of his homestead, then the medicine will stand alert within him. So he examines his wives. If it is one of the wives of that man who is a witch, then the heart of the witch-doctor will patter about her, and he will commence to make his revelations public.'

I think it is clear from this account that a witch-doctor, while dancing, does not simply weigh up the advantages of denouncing this or that man. Doubtless he does this to some extent, but it is evident that there is also a measure of free and unconscious association.

Surrender of the Audience

A witch-doctor does not only divine with his lips, but with his whole body. A witch-doctor's dance contrasts strikingly with the usual ceremonial dance of Azande. The one is spirited, violent, ecstatic, the other slow, calm, restrained. The one is an individual performance organized only by traditional movements and rhythm, the other a collective performance. It is true that several practitioners may perform together. But in this case they often form themselves into a professional chorus which backs up the songs of an individual performer and gives him a supporting background. Usually only one, or two at the most, will be actually "dancing questions" put to them at the same time. Very often there is only one witch-doctor present at a seance.

Their dancing is the most spirited performance of the art that I have ever witnessed. Once I was accustomed to their peculiar costume and weird gestures and saw their movements only as rhythmic expression I was able to observe how fine a spectacle they presented. They dance mainly on their to twisting their feet into every imag nable position, but always in tir to songs and drums. Occasiona an individual will make son grotesque movement of his ov in order to attract the attention the spectators. Thus I have seen man dance for a considerab time while sitting on the groun with his legs spread out in front him. In this position he manag to propel himself about with h buttock muscles. Such an exhib tion is rare, being invented as stunt by the performer, for as a ru witch-doctors restrict themselv to a common form of dance.

It is important to notice th witch-doctors not only dance b make their own music with han bells and rattles, so that the effe in conjunction with gong an drums is intoxicating, not only the performers themselves, but al to their audience; and that th intoxication is an appropriate co dition for divination. Music, ryt mic movements, facial grimac grotesque dress, all lend their a in creating a proper atmosphe for the manifestation of esote powers. Audience members follo the display eagerly and move th heads to the music and even repe the songs in a low voice when th are pleasing themselves rather th adding to the volume of chorus. would be a great mistake to su pose that there is an atmosphere awe during the ceremony. On t

ntrary, everyone is jovial and nused, talking to each other and aking jokes. Nevertheless, there is doubt that the success of the itch-doctor's profession is largely ue to the fact that he does not ly entirely upon the settled faith his audience, but makes belief sier by compelling their sur- nder to sensory stimuli.

We have to remember, moreover, at the audience is not observing mply a rhythmic performance, ut also a ritual enactment of agic. It is something more than a nce, it is a fight, partly direct d partly symbolic, against the wers of evil. The full meaning of seance as a parade against witch- aft can only be grasped when is dancing is understood. An server who recorded only ques- ns put to the witch-doctors d the replies which they gave ould leave out the whole mech- ism by which the answers are tained, and even the answers emselves.

A World of Innuendo"

BEFORE the commencement of a seance the performers eat ne of their medicines which ve them power to see the unseen d to enable them to resist great igue. I have been told by witch- ctors that it would not be possible stand so much exertion had they t previously eaten medicines. edicines prime them with power resist witchcraft. It goes into their stomachs and dancing shakes it up and sends it all over their bodies, where it becomes an active agent, enabling them to prophesy. In this active state it tells them who are witches and even enables them to see spiritual emanations of witch- craft floating about as little lights. Against these evil powers they wage a tremendous fight. They rush backwards and forwards, stopping suddenly and listening intently for some sound or search- ing eagerly for some sight. Sudden- ly one of them sees witchcraft in a neighboring garden, though it is invisible to the uninitiated, and rushes towards it with gestures of resolution and disgust. He quickly runs back to get some medicine from his horn and dashes away again to smear it on a plant or tree where he has seen the witch- craft settle. They frequently make dashes into the bush in this way and eagerly search for witchcraft along a path in the grass, or from the top of a termite-hill.

Every movement in the dance is as full of meaning as speech. All this jumping and leaping em- bodies a world of innuendo. A witch-doctor dances in front of one spectator or gazes intently at another, and when people see this they think that he has spotted a witch, and the object of their attention feels uncomfortable. Spectators can never be quite certain about the meaning of a witch-doctor's behavior, but they

can interpret in a general way from his actions what he is feeling and seeing. Every movement, every gesture, every grimace, expresses the fight they are waging against witchcraft, and it is necessary for the meaning of a dance to be explained by witch-doctors as well as by laymen to appreciate its full symbolism.

The Web of Belief

WITCH-DOCTORS have always been part of Zande culture. They figure in the oldest traditions of their nation. Their seances occasion one of the few types of social gatherings outside family life, and from an early age children have taken part in them as spectators, chorus and drumme Azande do not consider what th world would be like without witc doctors any more than we consid what it would be like witho physicians. Since there is witc craft there are naturally witc doctors. There is no incentive agnosticism. All their beliefs ha together, and were a Zande give up faith in witch-doctorho he would have to surrender equa his belief in witchcraft and orac A seance of witch-doctors is public affirmation of the existe of witchcraft. In this web of lief every strand depends up every other strand, and a Zan cannot get out of its meshes beca this is the only world he knows.

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African Sculpture from The Segy Gallery, New York, N. Y.
Drawings by Gyula Zilzer—Maps by Norman Swanston

TO CATCH A THIEF

THE local witch doctor was tall and powerfully built, with great scars across his chest, cut in ritually significant designs. His face s strong and angular, with thick lips which hung pendulously, and a rrow forehead, squeezed into a perpetual scowl. His face had been sted with white ashes, and he slouched into the clearing where the rreting out" would take place, looking thoroughly disreputable and an.

The witch doctor carried a leather sack and a gourd filled with water. also produced an antelope horn, which was a kind of badge of office a sorcerer; and with these accoutrements, he squatted on the ground d began to lay out amulets and a small collection of polished bones. also poured some of the water in his hands, and sprinkled it around ground in front of him. Then he shook a small amount of white wder from the horn, and seemed to be ready for business.

He lifted the bones, shook them and tossed them into the air. This ual of tossing the bones, or its variant, the casting of sticks, is basic most African divination proceedings.

The natives in the village had gathered around him with an artlessness t never ceased to puzzle me, since they obviously exposed themselves possible identification as the "guilty party." In this case the witch ctor drew a line from each bone—there were six—and pointed to man standing at the end of each line.

The men were pushed out into the circle, and the witch doctor turned he chief and said: "One of these men is the thief!"

The suspects were placed in a circle. The old chief was visibly angry, parently because some of his relatives were among the suspects. He led a knife from a waistband he wore around his stomach, and bran- ned it over the heads of the men.

He chattered some words which I did not understand; and [my com- nion] M. Royale explained to me that he was offering the guilty

man an opportunity to confess and pay a fine. The men hung th heads in dejection, but no one spoke.

The chief became almost frantic in his anger. He shouted and gesture and finally turned to the witch doctor and waved his hand commanding

"The thief will be caught, and he will die!" the old chief roared.

The witch doctor now came forward. I observed Lusungu standi behind him, and it struck me suddenly that she had now entered t case, advising him what to do. She took no part in the ceremony, b seemed to be watching the six men with fixed attention. Her black ey glowed in the dark shadows of her face.

The witch doctor handed the nearest of the six suspects a small bir egg. The shell was so fragile it seemed transparent, and it was obvio the slightest pressure would crush it. He directed each man to pass to the next, and the one who was guilty would crush the egg and th reveal his guilt. The natives crowded forward, more at ease now th suspicion was focused on the six men in the circle.

The fifth man took the egg, his face distorted with sudden fear, and second later the tell-tale yolk oozed between his fingers. He held hand out, letting the shattered egg shell fall to the ground. His eyes we white, and his loose lips began to tremble as he chattered suddenly wh seemed to be a confession.

(*From Witness to Witchcraft by Harry B. Wright. Funk & Wagnalls Co pany, New York, 1957.*)

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THE SUBSTANCE OF WITCHCRAFT

Paul Bohannan

THERE are several parts of the world in which post mortem erations are performed in order discover cause of death. We are familiar with it in our own iety from the evidence at public ls and from reading mystery ries. Poison can often be de- ted in no other way. Even when foul play is suspected, the dical causes of many mysterious ths can be explained only by an mination of the vital organs.

There is an area in central ica in which post mortem opera- ns also occur. The reason given performing them is the same n our own society—to determine the cause of death. But there is one tremendous difference. Our doctors look for symptoms of disease. African "doctors" are looking for something else altogether—witchcraft substance.

Many tribes of central Africa, from Eastern Nigeria to the Southern Sudan, south to include most of the Congo, believe the power of witchcraft has a physical root. African tribes differ widely from one another, in no respect more than in their thinking about the physical nature of witchcraft. Some of them say that only if there is witchcraft substance in the body, which is often described as a sort

of extra organ, can acts of witchcraft be performed. Among the Tiv of central Nigeria, the substance is a growth on the heart. I have been present at several post mortem operations performed among this tribe, and have seen witchcraft substance on two occasions. I do not know precisely what it is, but it looks like blood which has been forced into pockets in the pericardium tissues surrounding the heart. Sometimes it is a dull blue color, sometimes red. Tiv tell me that it is sometimes white, but I have never seen white witchcraft substance.

Most peoples of eastern Nigeria and the Cameroons seek witchcraft substance by examining the heart of a corpse. However, the Ejagham people of the Cameroons examine the liver. The Alima peoples of the Belgian Congo examine the lungs, and the Banyangi the womb and Fallopian tubes of female suspects. Gallstones are considered by some tribes to be the seat of witchcraft power. A few peoples examine the blood in the veins of the corpse: they read their answers about whether or not the deceased was a witch by the absence or presence of blood in certain veins, its color and its viscosity.

Other peoples say that witchcraft is indicated, not by the presence of a special organ, but rather by certain pathological states of normal organs. In one area, black spots on the lungs are a sign that the deceased was a witch. Throug out much of the Belgian Cong witchcraft substance is to be fou in the intestines. Those Europea and Americans who have seen tend to think that it is food in t intestine, at certain stages of dig tion. Amazingly enough, there is doctor's report on these operati so far as I can discover.

The "Agent" of a Death

THESE post mortem operati are necessary in a commun in which all death must have only a cause, but also a motive will it. Africans are sensible peop They know the "cause" of dea as well as we do—one person d of old age, another of disease a still another by accident. Howev mere "cause" is not enough them. They must explain w made the cause operative. We, our civilization, have been trai not to ask this question most of time. Yet, a man I know was fou to suffer from a rare blood ease—only about ten cases a y are reported. His question w "Why me?" It is just such a qu tion that witchcraft beliefs answer. If it is known who in community has the power to m people ill and cause their dea it becomes possible to put "blame" for illness and death o unsatisfactory social relationsh

African peoples of the area are considering feel that they m know not merely the "cause"

ath, but also its "agent." The gent" is usually a witch. He or e performs the act of bewitching using the power which the ecial organ supplies. A few people that this act of bewitching is voluntary, like breathing. Most, wever, claim that it is a purely luntary act and add that it is a ychic one. If, on post mortem, a an's body was found not to ntain witchcraft substance, he uld not have bewitched anyone. it does contain witchcraft sub-nce, he may or may not have witched someone. But in all es, his own death was caused his own witchcraft substance, ich had been turned back on n by stronger powers.

cery is Different

BEFORE we go further, it is necessary to distinguish witch-ft from sorcery. Witchcraft is ways a psychic act. It may be ne by either men or women. No e who is not a witch knows the hnique or can perform it. There-e, an anthropologist will have eat difficulty gathering informa-n on witchcraft, because all the rsons of the tribe will profess norance. Each person knows that himself, is not capable of per-ming an act of bewitching. wever, he still believes that ne other people are capable of it. Sorcery, on the other hand, is not psychic act. It is a magical act which a sorcerer uses medicines —the "brews" of historical witches of Europe—chants or spells in order to bring about the end he has in mind: usually the death or injury of a person. Sorcerers may be either men or women. They are more likely men, because women do not as a rule have access to the medical knowledge of a primitive society.

The common European notion that women may be witches while only men may be sorcerers, has not been found adequate by anthropologists, even for describing the European forms. A better classification is between "psychic acts" of witchcraft in which, from the purely physical point of view, nothing happens, and physical acts of sorcery, in which medicines are manipulated and spells are chanted.

Obviously, then, witchcraft is a psychic act; unlike sorcery, it cannot be learned. If the power comes from within the person himself, he must have the physical organ necessary to perform it. The power of the African sorcerer comes from medicines and chants. As it can be learned, sorcery may be performed by any person of evil disposition.

True witchcraft, because it is an explanation of a psychic act and is not a physical act, must be "proved" by inverting the logical processes. Scientific argument, at least at one level, argues from cause to effect. Witchcraft is traced

from effect to cause, usually on the basis of false premises. The reasoning runs something like this:

I am ill. Illness is caused by witchcraft (a presumably false premise). X does not like me (perhaps I have given him good reason), and he has been acting in a suspicious way. Therefore X has bewitched me (a false sequitor). Therefore X is a witch.

How Oracles are used

IN some African societies, a great deal of thought and ingenuity go into "proving" the accusation. Most of the societies which we are examining here make use of oracles in order to prove the existence of witchcraft. One of the most common is that known as the poison oracle. The poison oracle usually works by administering doses of a well-known plant poison to chickens, meanwhile addressing the poison (considered to be a sentient substance) with various questions. If the chicken dies, the answer is affirmative. If it recovers, the answer is a negative.

Many experiments have been carried out in this matter—the fate of the chicken does not depend primarily on the strength of this particular poison. The poison seems actually to be selective in some way which is not yet known. At any rate, about half the chickens die and about half recover. Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard, who lived with and studied the Azande for two years, used the poi oracle as a means of regulat the everyday problems which ar in his household. He found it, says, as good a way to make mi decisions as any other.

The oracles can obviously used to gloss over the false sequi in an argument. That is, they "determine" witches. As an Afric I go to an oracle master wit chicken or two, and I ask him put questions to it. I will "Is X bewitching me?" Only oracle can give me an answe this question. Since I believe witching to be a psychic act must have parapsychic or su natural means to "prove" it. supernatural means available most Africans in this area is selective poison.

An oracle of this sort, or s other, is a good way to disc whether or not a certain person witch. But it is not infallible. the death of the suspected witc much surer means of determi the presence of witchcraft is fou in the post-mortem operat Among the Azande the operati performed by a ceremonial b brother of the deceased. The op tor makes incisions just below xiphoid cartilage of the co Sometimes a piece of intestine pop out when the first incisio made; that is said to be witch substance. If not, the intestin removed, and the wise men of community examine it. After

ow whether a man was a witch or , the intestine is replaced and is buried.

f the corpse was found not to ntain witchcraft substance, then assumption is made that the ceased must have been killed the witchcraft of someone else. at means that a witch is still ive in the community. In the rs before effective British or gian administration (part of Azande are in the Sudan, the in the Congo), Azande might re "discovered" the name of the ch from an oracle and presented n with the evidence of his "guilt." could then perform a ceremony dging not to commit further s, or he might be killed.

The second way of handling the tter—and the only one avail- e today—is to make "ven- nce magic." This magic, made n nail parings of the deceased l certain magical herbs, is meant turn the action of the witch onsible for this death back on himself. The witchcraft sub- nce kills its owner.

icion and Examination

AMONG the Tiv of central Nigeria, with whom I lived over two years while studying ir language and their customs, operation is carried out only the bodies of persons who have d suddenly and in their prime. aths of old people and of children ally do not need to be "explained" so fully as do deaths of vigorous adults. Children and the aged have a less firm hold on life, Tiv say, and it may be jarred from them with a slight jolt. But young adults take a good deal of killing.

One of the most dramatic operations I know was one performed at the funeral of a strong, apparently healthy man of 35 who died suddenly. His name was Uvia. Uvia's death occurred at the end of a long list of deaths among his close kinsmen. At the funerals of each of the kinsmen, a rite something like the preparation of Azande vengeance magic was performed. Now, the question was this: was Uvia another victim of an unknown witch, or was he the witch who had been killed by the vengeance ritual? The community's peace of mind was at stake.

At Uvia's funeral, his paternal kinsmen wanted to bury him, mourn and perform still another ritual to encompass the downfall of the witch. That is, his kinsmen did not want to examine his body to discover whether he was a witch. They would rather assume that he was not and live with the uncertainty. His age-mates claimed that it was possible that the elders of his paternal family were killing Uvia, and all the others as well, in order to "set right the land." That is, these people might be considered as sacrifices for the ritual good of the community. A post mortem operation was the only

way that the age set could discover "the truth."

The age mates therefore carried out the operation at the grave side. One of them, who was selected by the leaders, took a knife which had belonged to Uvia, sharpened it. Standing above the body, straddling it, he made a neat initial incision horizontally on the chest about two inches below the top of the sternum. Each corner, then, he turned down along the lower ribs so as to make the arc of an oval. The incision was deepened until he struck the bones of the ribs. He then drove the knife between two ribs, tapped its sides with an axe-handle, neatly cutting through each rib one at a time, and finally through the top portion of the sternum.

The knife was sharp and he worked quickly. There was no sound except his tapping. When he had finished cutting, he took a hook, made from the forked branch of a tree by another age mate. He pried upwards on the flap of flesh and bone. It rose with the slight sound of tearing tissue. It opened like a trap door and was laid down on the corpse's belly. Another layer of tissue was visible. He cut through that and the organs were exposed.

The operator placed his knife and hook carefully below the trap-door of flesh and bone and reached in, slowly, with his right hand. Again the sounds of tearing ligament and tissue. He lifted t heart out of its opening and turn it slowly.

"You see?" he said aloud.

Along the back of the heart wa blue lump and a red lump. Th looked like sacks of blood, bu was not allowed to examine th closely enough to touch the "You see?" repeated the oth who had stood nearby.

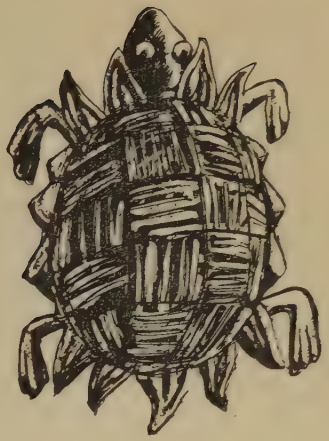
Sad, but Relieved

WE knew now. Uvia wa witch. Witchcraft s stance had been found on his he It had killed him. He had bewitc and killed several of his kinsm and now the counter-magic rebounded on him and killed h

The operator replaced the h in Uvia's chest, closed the t door and wrapped the chest al with a strip of cloth. The body again wrapped and buried.

The elders, Uvia's kinsmen his age-mates performed a s ceremony after they buried h They made up the fetish which say contains the elements for p and justice. They then brok One of the ingredients is a from the hearth, symbolizing peace of home life. As they sma the fetish, the small cloud ashes drifted away on the br Everyone departed. Sad, bec their friend and brother had proved a witch. Relieved, bec now they knew the source o evil and could rest without fea

'ARIETIES
)F WITCHES



dwin M. Loeb

T is said that the dog is man's best friend. Truer yet may be generalization that a diction- is a writer's best friend. Yet at es a definition may be repeated n one authority to another hout being entirely reliable, e an implied generalization y cover many but not all cases. it is with the dictionary defini- of witchcraft. This is presented "the power to practice magic, ecially black magic."

The witch in modern terminology sually thought of as a female; anthropology this need not be case. Here I must also submit objection that, at least in Africa south of the Sahara, the witch is an imaginary person, whereas the sorcerer (the villain who uses black magic to puncture images and befoul footprints, and who administers real or imaginary poison) is quite another being, and this time, a real culprit. Doctors and magicians are matters of fact; witches are matters of conjecture.

We must not allow ourselves to be deluded by North American Indian witches, Malay witches, or even the three weird sisters of Macbeth; they may all combine the sorcerer (or sorceress) with the witch, but this need not always have been the case. The African specializes. To

him the witch is one person, the witch doctor who is called upon to indicate the witch is another person, while the magician who uses white protective magic is a third, and the magician who uses black magic is a fourth.

The Europeans originally, I believe, made the same distinctions. It was the doctor who brewed the magic caldron; the witch got along under her own power. We must not allow the dog to bite its master, nor the dictionary to entrap the scholar.

Just What is a Witch?

IN answer to the familiar quotation from Shakespeare, "What's in a name?—A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," I can only reply that a witch does not smell very sweet to my acquaintances, the Kuanyama Bantu of South-West Africa. In former times, before white control, the Kuanyama tortured suspected witches, made them confess, and then killed them unless they were ransomed by their families. And the families soon got tired of paying for their black sheep. The Kuanyama believe that this course of action was justified, since "witches would not have confessed had they not been guilty."

Today, accusation, torture and execution of witches are all illegal, and the Kuanyama merely exile the suspects. Magicians, on the other hand, whether they practice black or white magic, although they to are not encouraged by the white are nevertheless both greatly feare and respected by the native Witches are considered unclea because they engage in what th natives consider unnatural b havior and because they are contact with the ghosts of the dea magicians merely deal with th supernatural.

Let us give an all-inclusiv definition of witchcraft, one th will apply universally. A witch is person who is supposed to cast baneful influence over objects, an mals, and persons by supernatur powers of projection. This definitio will cover the Australian nati with his magical pointing stick means of which he projects witchery on a neighboring trib the California Indians and t Bushmen of South Africa with th magical miniature bows and a rows; the Sicilians and the M hammedan North Africans w project harm from the "evil eye and there are modern believers "malicious animal magnetism" w profess their ability to direct th powers against a chosen victim.

This definition is tied up a with psychiatric practices. T civilized paranoiac does not belie that "someone" is sticking p into his image, but rather belie that "someone" is persecuting h by exerting a baneful influen Paranoia is a reversion under str to a primitive manner of thinki

Some comparisons from my collection of native Kuanyama accounts will illustrate the differences between the African magician and the African witch and will suggest similarities between African and European witches.

Male Magician, Female Witch

THE African magician, who is always a male, uses ritual, spells, and material substances, and he must acquire his magical powers as well as his equipment, from a medicine man. The witch, on the other hand, who the natives assert is usually a female, uses no ritual, no spell, and no material substance. Her power is innate. No matter what may be the tribal customs governing the inheritance of property or office, the witch inherits her power in the female line, usually directly from her mother. It is said that witchcraft flows with the mother's milk. The older the child grows, the stronger become her powers of witchcraft. Therefore old women especially are liable to accusation.

Although the power of the Kuanyama witch is believed innate she must go to the medicine man at the time of her initiation in order to acquire the powers of flight and invisibility. Thus the doctor aids the very witches whom he later is called upon to detect. However, if there were no witches in Kuanyama Land it is believed that there would be no sickness and death, and, therefore no need for doctors!

In Africa, as is usual the world over, the sorcerer may operate at any time, but the witch always operates at night. In European folklore witches fly by night also, and a gathering of witches is forced to disband at the first cockcrow. Again like witches everywhere, African witches have night animals as familiars, such as the owl, bat, hyena, and jackal. The Kuanyama witches are said to use the owls and jackals as messengers, and to be prone to ride on the backs of owls rather than on the well-known European broomsticks.

"Who Done It?"

WHEREAS the sorcerer casts an evil spell over the exuviae of his named victim, as for instance over his cast-off clothing, his spital, or his urine, the soul of the witch captures (eats) the soul of another person. The witch is believed to leave her skin and fly at night to her victim's hut, and there she consumes his liver, the seat of life. The sufferer then will die a lingering death unless a medicine man cures him. Or the male witch may alight on the roof of the hut and shoot his prey with miniature arrows.

The female witch is not allowed to use male weapons and must project small cereal pellets. In either case the intruded objects (sometimes called "pains") must

be sucked out by a "sucking-doctor." This practitioner "feels" for them with his hands, using the art of massage. Still another method of killing by witchcraft, well-known in Africa and reputed to be common among the Kuanyama, is for the witch to project "poison" into the victim from his Adam's apple. The use of the small bow and arrow, however, is the method mentioned in most Kuanyama accounts.

While the Kuanyama believe that sickness may stem either from the displeasure of their High God, or from neglect of the ancestor cult, or from the machinations of a sorcerer, yet they attribute ultimately all illness and accidental deaths to witchcraft. "If it were not for the evil witches," the people exclaim, "we would all live forever!" Even if a tree falls on a man, they believe the accident due to witchcraft.

Like the child, the illiterate, and the neurotic, the African asks not "What caused this?" but rather, "Who did it?" Life in the native habitation, called the *kraal* in South Africa, is one long "Who done it?" mystery. It is up to the witch-doctor to solve the mysteries.

In former times, before white men took control, native law ruled "a life for a life." Theoretically, for every death one or more witches had to be apprehended and then either ransomed or shot. The witch-doctor exposed the supposed witc by passing a hot knife over hi hands and fingers, at the same tim calling out the locations and name of unpopular persons. Albinos, ma formed people, and the poor, ol and useless were especially liabl to accusation. Those who had bee near the deceased shortly befor his death also came under su picion. However, the rich an powerful were never imperiled i this manner. They could hav bought their freedom. The h knife was well greased, but whe it stuck to the witch-doctor's ski the person he was naming at th moment was revealed as the witc

If this rule of a life for a life ha actually been carried out, t Kuanyama would have been dec mated. But all human lives b longed legally to the king, and f every life taken by a subject t monarch had to be paid a head cattle; and also a number medicine-men claimed high fe Therefore only important peo were avenged; many a "witc went undetected, and the incide of fatal illnesses remained high Kuanyama Land. (We now that malaria is endemic in region.)

Kuanyama Witches

THE following account of habits of Kuanyama witc was obtained from a lead Kuanyama witch-doctor:

"Owls are said to be the dogs of itches. The witches ride on owls nd use pythons for their whips. person should not kill an owl. he does he must be treated by a octor. Otherwise, he will get sthma and be unable to breathe.

"A witch often confesses as llows: 'I was riding on a female wl and another witch was riding n a male owl. The other witch ft her owl, and that is why I was ught. My owl flew away with her ate.'

"The witches have meetings. me ride on owls, some on jackals, nd some on hyenas. When they eet they dance on the witches' ayground. The witches there do ot have sexual intercourse or any decent rites.

"If a man is married to a witch, wever, male witches will come nd have intercourse with her. he witch woman opens the gate the kraal for the male witches. hen she does this, a mark is t on her left hand, which the tch-doctor is able to discover.

"A witch leaves his skin, flies in e air, and shoots at a person with miniature arrows. Then he es back again into his skin. But if fore he returns another witch mes and salts the skin, the first tch will die when he puts it on ain."

The similarity between the rican witch and the European tch must by now be apparent. th have the ability to fly by night through the air. Both have the tell-tale witches' mark on their bodies, both attend a "witches' Sabbath," and both have animal familiars. Finally, both cause disease and death by using the power of projection.

A still further resemblance between European and African witchcraft is striking. It was quite common among many peoples of Africa to remove the taint of witchcraft by burning the witch alive. Northern neighbors of the Kuanyama formerly followed this practice and I believe that the Kuanyama also at one time had the same custom. Nowhere in the world outside of Europe and Africa was witch-burning practiced, although it is an obvious method of removing the "uncleanliness" caused the entire community by the presence of either heresy or witchcraft. The similarities between African and European witchcraft are not fortuitous; Africa is geographically far too near early Mediterranean influence to have remained untouched by cultural migrations.

And Now Witchcraft Insurance

DIFFERENCES as well as likenesses exist between the European and the African witches. While witches in Europe were considered "unclean" because they enjoyed unnatural contact with the Devil, the Kuanyama witches are considered unclean and terrifying because of their contact

with ghosts, their contrary behavior, and their initiation.

In order to become a witch a Kuanyama man must request sexual intercourse with his mother. If she accepts the invitation, she dies; if she refuses, he dies. The more horrible the deed with which the witch stands under accusation, the less likely it is that the Kuanyama witch exists as a real person. It does not seem likely that anyone in the primitive world will willfully impersonate a witch, since everywhere here incest and witchcraft are considered inseparable.

The Kuanyama ideas of the supernatural, including their ideas of witchcraft, are neither illogical, prelogical, nor childish. They are, however, pre-scientific. The great Shakespeare, in his writings, like other intellectuals of his times, was equally pre-scientific, for he professed belief in ghosts and witches. Europe gradually emerged fro what we now call "superstitions" a a result of the Renaissance scientif revolution and then of the ensuin Industrial Revolution. In our cou try the farmer may long hav persisted in seeking supernatur aid in healing or rain making, y when his Model T went wrong h did not rely on faith, but "got o and got under."

Parts of Africa are now unde going an industrial revolution an the machinery of the white ma is being accepted without fear of t supernatural. Yet in the past t fear of witchcraft was one of t main forces which kept Africa "Dark Continent" and prevent even the domestication of nati wild animals, such as the zeb south of the Sahara. Even tod when the free and independe people of Ghana take out insu ance policies, they take out witc craft insurance.

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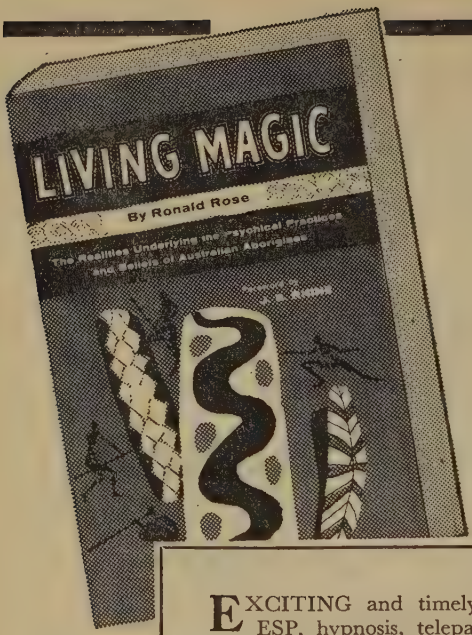

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EXORCISING DEMONS ON THE SWAHILI COAST

Robert F. Gray

A few tentative drum beats sounded in the midday stillness of the small fishing village of Bomandani on the Tanganyika coast. The random beats took on a regular rhythm as a small procession came from the house of the mganga—the village medicine man. At the head of the procession was a white goat led by the mganga's assistant; its horns were adorned with colored ribbons. It was followed by a drummer and then a double file of twelve women, sing-

ing together and dancing. In their midst a black-clad woman danced with little mincing steps and downcast eyes; a stick protruded from her mouth. The mganga himself marched in the rear, carrying a black scepter.

The village people came from their houses as the procession wound its way through the village streets. Some of the women joined the dancers, the children following in their wake. The men stood in the shade and watched. After circumambulating the village, the group returned to the mganga's house, where the women and the mganga went inside.

This little parade marked the opening of the sixth day of a ceremony for exorcising a demon. I had visited the village to watch parts of the ceremony on several previous days, as part of my anthropological field-work in East Africa, and on this day I was on hand with notebook and camera to witness the entire ritual. But, as a male, I was barred from the mganga's house. My wife, though, was allowed entrance, and she reported on that phase of the ritual. First the woman in black submitted to having her head shaved. Then she was dressed in a flared skirt composed of many colored cloths. Bells were tied to her ankles, and a large turban of colored cloths was ceremoniously placed on her head. Incense was wafted to her mouth, nose, and ears.

The stick was left in her mouth as a reminder that she was strictly enjoined to muteness for the whole week of the ceremony. When all was ready, the mganga chanted a long invocation, to which the women responded at the appropriate places. Then a signal was given for the drummers to start playing outside on the verandah, and the assembly of women and magicians came out to begin the afternoon's session of dancing.

The principal character in this drama—the woman dressed in black—was Mwenshika binti Bakara, who was believed to be possessed by a demon. About three weeks before, Mwenshika had been thrown down violently by an invisible force, and thereafter her mind was disoriented, though her physical health remained good. To the villagers, this episode had all the earmarks of a demon possession, particularly as it was known that Mwenshika had been previously possessed by a demon, who in that case, had afflicted her with an earache.

After Mwenshika's fall and subsequent confusion, her father took her to a mwalimu—a man who was well versed in the Koran and in the rites and lore of Islam. He questioned her carefully, taking pains to determine the exact day and hour of her fall. Then he consulted his astrological charts, which provided him with a Koranic refe

ence from which he was able to divine the cause of Mwenshika's misfortune. A demon, he stated, had possessed her and lodged itself in her head; it was the same demon that had caused her earlier illness. With this information, the father went to consult the mganga, and there it was decided that a ritual dance would be necessary to get rid of the demon.

Islamized Pagan Ritual

SIMILAR dances might have been seen at that time in many of the villages along the East African coast. As it was the week before the Moslem month of Ramadhan, during which exorcism would not be permitted, there was a press of patients who were anxious to get rid of their demons. The Africans of the coast are nominally Moslems, and their culture is a blend of Islamic and pagan elements. The prevailing demon cult is derived from both sources.

Mwenshika belonged to the Segeju Tribe; her village of Bomandani is one of the thirty Segeju villages strung along the Tanganyika coast between the port of Tanga and the Kenya border. Most of these are fishing villages. They all possess at least one mosque, and a school where the children are given elementary instruction in reading the Koran.

The Segeju are tri-lingual: in their homes they use their tribal language (a dialect of Digo), but the language of polite discourse is Swahili, which is also understood by the Arabs of the coast and contains a large number of Arabic loan words. Arabic is the liturgical language of the Segeju, used in all religious ritual. Nearly every child spends a year or two learning to recite passages from the Koran and laboriously copying them out in Arabic, but very few of the people understand the language.

The demon cult, which is so important in the lives of the Segeju, has a basis in orthodox Islamic theology. The demons that the Segeju believe in are mentioned in the Koran, but in such a contradictory way that Mohammedan scholars have never been able to agree on their true nature. The Segeju are concerned mainly with two kinds of demons—jini and shetani. The jini (derived from the Arabic word djinn) are spirits inhabiting the sea, who have power over the fishes and the waves.

The fishermen, to insure their safety and success in fishing, make offerings to the jini at sea and perform special ritual to appease them. The demons of dry land are called shetani in Swahili, from Arabic shaitan, cognate with an ancient semitic word from which our own "Satan" is derived. Shetani are also called by the Bantu word pepo which in some of the pagan tribes refers to nature spirits.

In popular belief, shetani are mischievous spirits inclined to be ill-tempered and to harm people. Accidents are usually attributed to shetani and they are thought to be capable of causing almost any kind of sickness. They can also be helpful to a person—cause his crops to flourish or bring misfortune to his enemies—but such help is considered to be unwholesome and would not be openly solicited. The notions of witchcraft and sorcery which are widespread in East Africa have been assimilated into the demon cult among the Segeju.

Satan, the Rebel

THEIR religion teaches the Segeju that shetani are creatures of Iblisi, the Devil, who is a rebel against God. As such they dislike and fear the Koran, which is the symbol of obedience to God. This symbol avails itself for protective use against the inroads of shetani. Texts from the Koran copied on paper are frequently worn—almost universally by children—to guard the wearer against shetani and other dangerous influences such as the evil eye. They are usually sewed up in a little leather pouch and worn on a string round the neck. Another method of using the Koran is to write a passage on a board and then wash the ink off into a vessel; this fluid is thought to contain the essence of the written passage and may be taken by mouth as medicine or sprinkled on a patient.

The mwalimu, who can divine the presence of a shetani in a patient, also offer their services in exorcising demons by means of orthodox Islamic ritual. This method is accepted by many men of the tribe, who prefer the greater dignity and privacy that it offers. Most of the women, though, as we have seen in the case of Mwenshika, prefer to have their demons exorcised by the mganga. As his name implies, the mganga is essentially a pagan functionary who makes no pretence to Moslem learning. He practices herbalism and deals in charms, love philters, and the like, but his main occupation is the exorcising of shetani.

In trivial cases of demon possession he uses simple means of exorcism. He may conduct a seance with the patient, in which he establishes communication with the shetani and tries to persuade it to leave off tormenting the victim. His fee for a seance is only four shillings. In more serious cases the only effective method is a ritual dance, which is supervised throughout by the mganga, and which costs the patient's family the large sum of 400 shillings.

Before the mganga can do anything at all he must have the mwalimu's diagnosis confirming that the patient is indeed possessed by a shetani and giving some information about the nature of the

shetani. For shetani are not all alike, but are divided into a number of different tribes having different characteristics and degrees of malignancy. Within one tribe there are different lineages and families, much as in human society. In fact every shetani is an individual with his own name and personality.

A competent mwalimu is supposed to provide a good deal of information about an aggressing shetani, but he is not able to divine its name; this important fact can only be disclosed by the shetani himself at the conclusion of a successful dance. According to the theory of the ritual dance, a shetani is inordinately fond of noise, dancing, blood, and frenzy. He is promised all this in the dance if he will evacuate his position in the afflicted patient.

Voice from the Tent

WE return now to Mwenshika's dance at the village of Bomandani. The twelve women who danced in the procession and took the most active part in the dancing which followed had all been previously possessed by demons and had been cured by Mwenshika's mganga. Other women joined the dancing from time to time and a few young men of the village, but the twelve initiates formed the hard core.

As the afternoon wore on, the dancers became more and more intent on their work. After about two hours there was a pause. Two offering tables were laid out, each containing seven coconuts, seven bananas, a large rice cake, and a bottle of honey. The goat was led away to be ritually slaughtered, and Mwenshika was placed on a stool. The women dancers surrounded her and held cloths over and around her so that she was completely tented.

The mganga recited an imprecation and there was a minute or two of tense silence. Then a squeaky voice began speaking from inside the tent. This was the voice of the shetani for which everyone had been waiting. It went on speaking for about five minutes. The substance of its remarks, as explained to me by people who professed to understand its language, were in praise of the dance with which it had been entertained. It was completely satisfied, so it stated, and promised to evacuate Mwenshika's head at the completion of the dance and leave her mind unencumbered. Then it told its name, which was extremely long, going back many generations.

The cloths were whisked away and the drums started again. Mwenshika was hoisted up on the mganga's back and he danced about with her pickaback for a couple of minutes while the whole company broke into a frenzied dance. The dancing stopped and people gathered around Mwenshika

to offer her tidbits of cake from the offering table, which they popped into her open mouth. Then all the dancers rested while portions of the food were passed around.

The mganga brought a bowl of blood from the slaughtered goat, which he mixed with honey and fed to the dancers. On tasting the blood, several of the women behaved wildly and danced madly about, whirling and cavorting. These women had been temporarily possessed by their old shetani, who were unseen attendants at the dance. They spoke with "tongues" and ran up to some of the spectators, including my wife and me, and made threatening gestures. When this excitement subsided the afternoon session was finished.

Exorcism as Entertainment

ALTHOUGH there was more dancing that night and again the next day—the seventh and final day—the climax had been reached when the shetani revealed his name. On the day after the dance ended, Mwenshika's father took me to see her at the mganga's house. She was still not allowed to talk and carried a stick in her mouth. She stood quietly while I complimented her on the fine dance. Just then the drums began playing for the start of a new dance. Mwenshika trembled and started stamping her feet in the drum rhythm. It seemed obvious that the shetani was still with her. I mentioned this to her father, but he was not worried. He had heard the shetani promise to leave his daughter, and he knew that things are seldom done in a hurry on the languid Swahili coast.

I left the Segeju region a few days later and never learned the outcome of Mwenshika's exorcism. She probably recovered completely and, judging from other case histories, it is not unlikely that she will be repossessed by her shetani sometime in the future. If it only affects her head and does not cause a physical illness, she may even come to regard it fondly as a tutelary, though capricious, spirit.

The complex of behavior in a case of shetani possession, starting with the initial fall and following through to the end of the dance, tends to conform to a common pattern. The people of the village know what to expect from a shetani victim—or, as they would put it, from a shetani—and they are not often disappointed. The shetani cult serves the Segeju by justifying some of their ancient pagan beliefs in terms of Islamic theology. With the dance of exorcism it also provides a major form of entertainment in their sleepy villages.

CHARMS AND MAGIC

Geoffrey Parrinder

WEST African priests and diviners are generally expert "doctors" and administer "medicine," a term which covers both natural healing agencies—leaves, skins, and the like—and the use of magical or spiritual influences that are held to be associated with them.

There is no doubt at all that West African "doctors" have a profound knowledge of the properties of a multitude of roots, bark, leaves, and herbs. They are certainly acquainted with many poisons little known apart from expert toxicologists, and perhaps some that are still unknown to science. Poisons may be given of which the effects are immediate, others produce no visible result for months, yet others imitate the symptoms of well-known diseases. The latter, of course, are used by evil doctors, and no honest man would think of employing them.

The "medicines" given by a professional "doctor" are often, perhaps principally, chosen for imagined or spiritual reasons. Many medicines are chosen because of some observed or fancied resemblance to the malady. A spotted leaf may be considered as a good remedy for a spotted skin, and a sharp quill ought to serve as protection against enemies of the soul.

The purely herbal use of ordinary leaves and plants as purges, sedatives, and plasters, is often known to people outside the professional religious classes, and these may be of greater medicinal value on the physical side. Christian converts distinguish between the legitimate use of herbal remedies, and the more magical or sympathetic use of the objects dispensed by the medicine man.

A young Agni medicine woman, when asked what leaves she used for treatment, said she did not know. But when she was in a trance she plunged into the forest, and plucked unconsciously those that were efficacious. When we asked if all sickness of the same type did not require the same treatment, she said that no two sicknesses were alike, but that they depend on the persons who are sick.

With his profound belief in a spiritual universe, the doctor, and the patient, never regard the treatment as purely material. Power of thought and will in the doctor, faith in the patient—these are essential ingredients. In addition, there is the belief in the invisible efficacy of the remedy, provided the correct word is spoken over it, or a true invocation made.

We may call this attitude "magical," but the doctor's attitude is not unreasoning, however strange to our way of thinking. He is a true scientist, in that he seeks to discover and use the laws of the universe, not only of "inanimate" nature, but of the whole spiritua cosmos. He believes that there ar spiritual powers that are hidden secrets that can be tapped; no necessarily that he can force thes powers to obey his bidding, bu that there are laws which may b set in motion by the knowledgeable as an electrician utilizes the force of nature to light his house.

Much of his practice is "sym pathetic" magic, based on th belief that use of a part of a thing or a copy of an object, may affec the whole. To wear the horn of a animal is thought to procure th protection of or against the whol beast. To destroy the nails or a image of an enemy will cause hi to die. A violent pain must b cured by a painful remedy; hen painless and tasteless Europea medicines are often regarded wi skepticism.

Personal Protection

A most powerful protecti charm is found in Ashan Dahomey and Nigeria, where have seen it. It is a small broom palm fibres, of common type, b with sacred objects attached. It clotted with blood and cowri it may contain a piece of cloth us by a menstruating woman, and h touched the tabooed objects avoid by its owner, and all manner dirt. Its nature therefore is v carious, and it takes every e upon itself. It has its own tabo

things that are "hateful" to it. Fowls and sheep may be sacrificed to it.

The horns of wild or domestic animals are worn as protections, the strength being in the horn: like our horseshoes. The horn is stuffed with leaves and powders, and incantations uttered over it. Teeth of lions, crocodiles, vipers, and other animals, usually encased in leather, are often tied in pairs and worn round the neck or loins, after consecration.

Gunshots wrapped up are worn against accidents or attacks. If the wearer is then killed by a gunshot, his medicine man will give out that the shot was not of metal, but of some other substance, such as buffalo hide, as was said when King Gezo of Abomey was killed.

Blacksmiths' cutters are worn wrapped up, as being harder than all metals that should protect the owner against cuts and attacks with knives. Miniature knives, that cannot be drawn, are to defend the owner against weapons, and prevent these being drawn. A bamboo whistle wrapped in goat's skin is a big charm; if the wearer is plotted against, he only has to whistle the name of the plotter, and all is undone.

Very common are small objects, which are called amulets or talismans. A leather packet, frequently worn round the neck, may contain dried leaves, or texts from the Koran. Mohammedan Hausa traders are great vendors of these amulets. Belts around the waist, or hidden out of sight, are protections against loose-living. Knots are frequently used, the knot having the virtue of preventing "tying," a spell.

A chewing-stick, decorated with red parrot feathers, a cock having been sacrificed over it by the diviner, is chewed by the owner and the pieces spat out on to the roof of his hut every day for a week. This should prevent evil words and quarrels.

Iron bracelets or chains are used against sorcery. Similar objects may be used by a woman to help conception. Weak and malformed children, and especially those who are born after others that have died, wear heavy, rattling bracelets and anklets, to drive away evil spirits. Rings on the fingers and toes are to protect against snakes and scorpions; small rings of twisted iron or copper imitate the snake. Practically everyone uses these.

The smaller charms are not worshipped, or sacrifices made to them generally. But they are prepared by and obtained from qualified men, and then sold in the market. Even the rings will have been heated in a pot of snake ashes, with the idea that a snake "will not bite his own."

Public Protections

MOST houses are protected by charms hanging above

the doorway, or stuck in the rafters. Koranic texts on strips of yellowed and dusty paper float above the heads of chiefs and notables who are far from being Mohammedans. Half calabashes, or bowls wrapped in colored cotton threads, hang over doorways, sometimes a large collection inherited from predecessors.

Many Yoruba and Fõn houses are protected by crudely carved wooden figures, with human features, that are fixed in the ground outside the door of the compound. A chain often attaches them to the ground. They are house guards, which should chain down any evil influence that arrives. Other shapes, more modern, are charms buried and covered with a concrete block, in which a chain has been set.

Nearly all fields are protected with charms; from a simple wisp of straw on a bamboo pole, to a complex packet of bones, skin, and leaves. No one would dare to steal from such a field (except the "civilized"!), unless the thief had a stronger counter charm; in which case the owner will prepare an even more deadly guardian. Similar packets of sticks, feathers, and bones protect houses, piles of stones, and other forms of property. The agricultural charms are believed to represent the god who has been asked to bless the harvest.

Outside some Yoruba villages may be seen a pole or branch which forbids access by one path or by half of the path, on alternat moons. The position of the pole i changed at each moon.

Very common in West Africa is protecting arch, over a path lead ing to a village, a sacred grove, o to the site where a religious cere mony is to be held. The arch i made of two poles, seven or eigh feet high, forked at the top where cross-bar or palm-frond joins th two supports. This arch may b plain, but generally has bones bamboo matting, a raffia basket a dead or dying fowl fastened to i

Aggressive Charms

OFFENSIVE charms are jus as varied. One of the mos renowned is Shigidi of the Yoruba A rude figure is made of clay and decorated with cowries an feathers. When sacrifices and in cantations are made, the spirit believed to go directly to the enem and stifle him; but if he has a mor powerful medicine it will retur and kill the sender. It is said tha human sacrifices were formerl offered to Shigidi. It is also used t protect houses and people.

A witch will lay a trail of "pr pared" soil across the porch of a enemy, or right round his hut. have seen a man nearly die fright, on seeing what prove to be quite harmless soot. Sa and water is sprinkled on th charm to remove its ill effects. similar trail of soil or sand is la

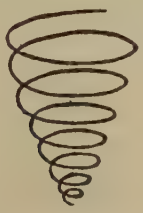
ound a house, and held to prevent itches from entering. A liana eld down with pegs is thought to atch hold of a witch and, even if ne succeeds in getting away, to ave a trail of blood.

Similarly, an amorous youth ill put sand and a preparation f leaves across the door of an mpty hut, then, having sent to call is desired, she must be his if she osses the threshold. Other love hiltres are made of fowls or owders, the name of the woman uttered over them by the diviner, nd the woman will come, it is aid; some will rise up in the night s if forced by an invisible power. jealous woman will seek a charm o make her rival impotent.

Other charms are held to make nen invisible, so as to enter huts t night, or even in the broad day-ght. Hunters are convinced that neir god Ogũ, or the forest fairies, an make them invisible when ttacked by an animal. Other otions make people fall into a deep sleep, so that their houses may be rifled. In fact, every event has its excuse.

Nails, hair, spittle, sweat, urine, washing-sponges and water, sleeping mats, dirty clothes, are all intimate to parts of the body, and so may be used in preparing charms against the persons to whom they belong. Hence great care is taken in the disposal of these things, especially by chiefs, who always have an attendant with a spittoon, for magical, not for hygienic, reasons.

There is great fear of "black magic," and poisoning directly seems to be common enough. Both suggestive means and actual contamination of food and drink may be used. Estimates of the amount of poisoning are difficult to make, as "natural" death is a foreign concept. When a chief dies, an inquest is held as to why this has occurred, for a chief should not die. Such a thing must have been done by an enemy.



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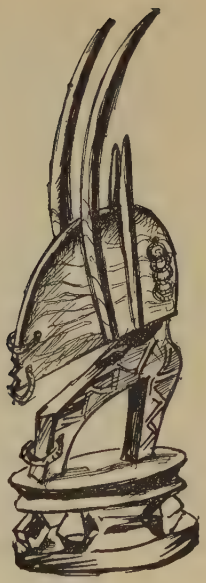

M. D. W. Jeffreys

IN 1937 a case of murder came before me for trial in the Bamenda division of the British Cameroons. The preliminary inquiry was held by the local magistrate who committed the accused native, Nfa, for trial on the charge of murdering an old tribeswoman, Nyongo. As the official trial judge, I proceeded in February 1937 to Nkoromanjong to hold my court. It meant a march of four days through a wild, roadless, seldom-visited tract of land. This was the country of the Wum tribe, who inhabit a rugged mountainous region where they are undisturbed and seldom visited, even by members of other tribes. They lead a peaceful life of subsistence agriculture, in naked, primitive simplicity.

The peace of these people had been disturbed one year before by a number of unexplained deaths. In addition, stones were falling from the sky on the roofs of their huts. Suspicions had been aroused and the dread whispers of witchcraft were heard. Then, one day,

an old woman of the tribe, Nyongo, was murdered in their village of Ikotomanjong. This woman had confronted her tribesman Nfa one night, calling out to him, "So it is you who are throwing these stones about and not the ghosts of our dead!"

"What do you mean, you old witch?" he replied. A deadly feud began, culminating in the violent death of Nyongo a few days later. When Nfa was brought to trial for her murder, a woman of the tribe, Eyibi, gave evidence for the prosecution. In my records of this testimony, from which I now quote, I found further reports of the strange falling of stones among these remote peoples.

The Return of Ghosts

EYIBI, like most of her people, had never left the environs of Nkoromanjong. She was duly sworn in, native fashion, by licking the barrel of the Court ceremonial gun. She stated:

"I was born at Koromanjong. I am not related to the accused. He belongs to my village. I am related to Nyongo for her half-brother was my husband. Nfa belongs to the same quarter of the village as old Nyongo did . . . About three months ago I made a fire in my compound, outside the hut. Nfa arrived. Shortly afterwards Nyongo also arrived there. Nfa turned to her and said: 'You are the person going about defaming me, saying I throw stones at night, as thoug I were an evil spirit returned night to terrify people, like th woman Aya who died and whos ghost came back at night an threw stones.' Nfa then picked u a faggot of firewood from my wood pile and hit Nyongo on the le side of her chest and over the hea The old lady died almost at once

I noted in my records at th time that this mysterious fall throwing of stones is attributed the return of ghosts. I was awar that accounts of these "poltergeist phenomena had been reported fro East Africa and also from th West Indies, and of course, Europe, but I did not expect find it in the remote track Bamenda as evidence in a murd case.

Ghost's Bananas

I had read of similar phenomen occurring in East Africa r ported by Alice Werner in h book, *Bantu Myth and Legend* (Lo don, 1933): "The Wazarmo belie ghosts as a rule to be mischievou thus persons passing near a rece grave after dark may be pelte with stones by the kungu (a fami ghost) . . . a trick which is al sometimes played by the ki yamkela (ghosts of children). Son well-authenticated reports fro clergy of the Universities Missio who have seen and felt lumps mud thrown about without visib agency, make one wonder wheth

ories like this ought not to be aken seriously. Similar occurrences earer home have sometimes been atisfactorily explained, but not lways.

"Two boys who had found some ananas hanging up a tree in the orest ate them. The bananas be-onged to a kinyamkela. That ight, when they were both asleep n the boys' house of their village, ney were awakened by a queer oise, and saw the one-legged, one-rmed kinyamkela standing in the oorway. He called out to them: You have eaten my bananas! You ust die.' And with that they were uddenly hit by stones flying about, umps of earth and even human ones. The boys jumped up, ran ut and took refuge in another hut ut the stones followed them there. ventually, the whole village had o move on account of this mys-erious throwing of missiles."

ick or Taboo?

THIRTY years as Administrative Officer in the southern rovinces of Nigeria brought me nto contact with much psychic henomena. But like most of these appenings, the strange falling ones might have been part of that abric of primitive consciousness hich weaves legend, myth, fears, nd dreams into its own truth and eality. The only evidence which I ould evaluate as a European ould have to come from one who was a disinterested party in the African world of the occult. Neither the evidence at the murder trial, nor the reports in Miss Werner's book could qualify—as it had come from native sources. However, I suspended my judgment, and tried to remember that falling stones are also part of European poltergeist tradition.

A few years after my visit to Nkoromanjong, I happened to be in Bamenda station when the Provincial Customs Officer arrived on a tour of inspection of the frontier customs post. That evening at dinner, he remarked that he had been worried about the mysterious troubles of one of his customs clerks, a senior official who had recently been transferred from Lagos to Victoria. The man had been forced to return to Lagos because at night, not only did stones fall on the roof of his corrugated iron house, but they also fell upon him though he was inside the house with all the doors and windows closed.

Here was fresh confirmation of the native testimony of the mysterious falling stones. But like many reported psychic events in Africa, I was left with questions rather than answers. Had this customs clerk been tricked by natives who wished to remove him from the premises? Or had he unwittingly violated some local taboo and aroused the vengeance of the ghosts of children?

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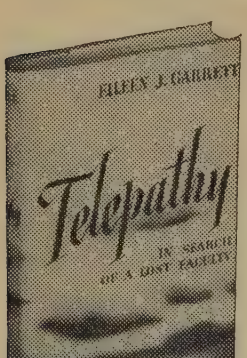

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lan P. Merriam

MUSIC — BRIDGE TO THE SUPERNATURAL

AFRICAN music is a functioning and functional part of frican culture, capable of a wide ariety of expressions, and similar many ways to non-academic estern music in structure. Possibly ore highly integrated into its ulture, and almost certainly prac-ced by larger numbers of people its society than in the Western orld, it is a part of everyday istence for African peoples. One its strongest expressions is in con-ction with religious activity where it is symbolic of the supernatural. Often it is the only means by which men seek to make contact with and, to a certain extent, control the supernatural world.

African music as a structure or system has not fared particularly well in the descriptions given of it by European travelers, missionaries, writers, and other students. Almost inevitably described in terms of drums, drumming, rhythm and percussive effect, it has come to be stereotyped in the Western

mind as a primitive or savage expression of a backward people who are incapable of absorbing the gentler, more subtle musical nuances which come with so-called civilization.

Yet, the range of African music extends far beyond this—shall we say "primitive"?—conception to include delicate changes of melodic line which sound to Western ears like monotonous repetition, subtle harps, lyres, and lutes whose soft tones are sometimes barely audible, changes of dynamic contrast, the use of climax and suspense, and many other devices which challenge our stereotyped impressions.

African and Western Systems

THIS is not to say, of course, that the African and Western systems are identical, although the number of similarities between them is far greater than is generally understood. Thus, without referring, of course, to the Western academic school of music theory, both systems use harmony and similar versions of the diatonic scale. Both have the tradition of accompaniment of the voice by musical instruments which are subordinate to the main melodic line and which produce harmonic effects.

Vocal quality is similar in the two systems, certainly markedly so when contrasted with the American Indian vocal style; for example, melodic lines are level in both, and there are other characteristi which point toward a possib unity of origin. The chief differenc between the two systems, on th other hand, lie in the points emphasis in the music structure— while Western musicians hav chosen to emphasize harmon Africans have elaborated on co cepts of rhythm and percussion.

It must be noted, howeve that rhythm, and especially percu sion, are not necessarily exclusive expressed in terms of drum drumming, or other instrumen which we classify as percussio rather, the concepts pervade voc and instrumental performances all kinds. Thus the singer's attack likely to be strong and sharp, h phrasing dynamic; the players trumpet-like instruments blow the horns with forceful attack a powerful concept.

Similarly, it is not only drur that emphasize rhythm—wheth they are present or not is, in parts Africa, of small consequence to t singer or instrumentalist who d livers his song with strong rhythm drive and attention to details rhythmic phrasing. It is the concepts of percussive and rhyt mic music that have carried stron ly into jazz, making the piano, example, a basically percussi instrument in the hands of t jazzman.

There are other differences b tween the two musical systems well, one of them emphasizing t

fferent uses to which the music is
it. It has been noted by a number
scholars that musical as well as
her aesthetic activity among non-
erate peoples frequently is a
ghly integrated and functioning
rt of the culture, in some contrast
Euro-American society in which
ere is a tendency to compart-
entalize the arts and to divorce
em from aspects of everyday life.

t as Part of Life

WHILE the comparison should not be driven too far, we do ve "pure" as opposed to "ap-ied" art, as well as the "artist" d "commercial artist" or "crafts-an" who are also differentiated th in role and function. We rther make a distinction between rtist" and "audience," with the mer tending to be limited in mber in comparison with the ter. Distinctions of this kind do t seem to be strong in non-erate societies; rather, art and e artist tend to be a part of e.

This does not mean, of course, at specialization is absent, but at e same time relatively large mbers of people within a non-erate society are usually com-tent in the arts, and aesthetic tivities are closely related to e culture as a whole. Thus while e usual Western functions of usic as entertainment, accom-niment for the dance, and in igious services are present as well in non-literate societies, music is used in many other settings.

Among the Hutu in Ruanda, for example, at least twenty-four general social song types are recognized by the people, including those played by professional musicians for entertainment, songs for beer drinking, war, to pay homage to a chief, at the birth of a child, to admonish erring members of the society, songs for hunting, harvesting or general work, to recount a successful elephant hunt, to deride Europeans, songs of death, vulgar songs and others. Further, within each of these categories sub-types may be distinguished. Thus certain songs are sung when taking a new canoe from the place it was constructed to the water, when paddling with a current, when paddling against a current, or to make the paddlers coordinate their work better.

Among the Tutsi of Ruanda, a similar range of musical material exists; songs for war and greeting, for boasting purposes, to flatter a girl, songs sung when young married women meet together and reminisce about absent friends, children's songs, and many more. Songs dealing with cattle are of special importance to the Tutsi, and these sub-types include boasting songs called ibiriirimbo in which two men sing in competition with each other, alternating musical phrases—they vie either in

praising one cow or in singing the merits of one cow against another.

Other songs are sung in praise of cows, and still others to indicate the importance of having cows; there are songs for the herder when he is getting ready to take the cattle home in the evening, when he is actually taking them home, when he is drawing water for them, and when he is with other herders in the evening. Praises for the royal cattle are sung, and even children sing special cow songs. Flute songs of a particular type circumvent cattle thieves in the night, and other songs recount historical events in which cattle have played a part.

Contact with Supernatural

AFRICAN music, then, plays a part in all aspects of culture—in political and social structure, in connection with linguistic activities and in economic life, to say nothing, of course, of its role in the total aesthetic system of the community. But probably one of its most important functions in African culture is in connection with religious activities, for music is almost universally conceived to be a means through which the supernatural is contacted and through which its presence is manifested.

A primary connection may be established between the form of a musical instrument and the supernatural; Viviana Pacques, in *Les Bambara* (Paris, 1954), describes this relationship in terms of particular kind of harp, the *ngo*

"The rectangular body of t instrument represents the mask Koumabana; the two side piec his eyes, the sounding hole h nose, the tail piece his mouth a teeth, the eight strings his wor It is also the image of his tomb . . The body also represents the fa of the diviner and his tomb, t two sticks, the grain which is p in the ground with the body. Ea sound given by each of the eig strings is a prayer.

"The harp presides at sacrific at cathartic or medicinal rites, purifications, apostolic rites, a solitary meditations. Its high no are celestial and symbolic of ple tude; its low notes connote terr trial things and want."

Thus, an instrument and sound can represent various rel ious facts and actions.

A further example of such lationship is found among t Lovedu of the Transvaal, as ported by J. D. and E. J. Krige *African Worlds* (London, 195 Here the drum cult serves as fourth category of forces by wh nature is regulated in the intere of man (the other three are throu properties intrinsic in various jects, animate and inanima the ancestors; and the control the queen). A drum is prima a musical instrument, but the same time it serves as an stract concept which is identif

th power, especially in connection th rites of transition. "The sacred ums of the tribe . . . which : said to contain under the onator a human skull and, in : case of the smallest, the facial n of a councillor, are mystically ked with the life of the queen d the welfare of the tribe . . . e . . . drums are spoken of as *'imo* (gods) as well as *digoma*, and y were beaten twice a year in : old days in a ceremony . . . to peal to the ancestors for rain d to thank them for the har- t . . . Associated with the sacred ums and also classed as *digoma* : the *zwidajani*, the weird istling ancestor spirits of the al lineage who come to earth the guise, it is said, of half-men h one eye, one arm, and one , to take part in the rites con- ted with the sacred drums . . . ey appear in the bush near : village and join in the singing *lesugu* songs which are sung, on se occasions, through specially nstructed secret whistles."

Musical instruments and the nds produced on them are very quently the avenue through ich religious expression is gained, d thus in every African group re are numbers of songs dedi- ted to the various gods. In ny instances musical instruments st be dedicated through formal emony, before they are properly ective, and thus Melville J. Her- vits has described the public consecration of drums in Dahomey (*Dahomey*, New York 1938).

The initial step in such a ceremony was the throwing of kola-nuts in a form of divination to ascertain whether the drums would be favorably received, and whether the gods would consent to come to them and thus take part in the ceremony. When the divination indicated a successful ceremony, the priest who had thrown the kolas chewed some of them "and spat them out on each drum in turn. He then took some rum in his mouth and sprayed it over the drums, after which he carefully examined two chickens that had been brought to him. He selected one, and after stroking it gently three times and touching the body of the drums with its body three times, he struck its head against each drum-head once with all his strength, stunning it.

"He then twisted the head and tore out the tongue, after which he painted a line of blood across each drum-head, also permitting a few drops of blood to fall on the side of each drum near its base. Plucking a few feathers from the bird, and using the coagulating blood as a paste, he fixed the feathers to the drums, with this completing the ceremony of consecration."

It is interesting to note further that in playing for Mawu-Lisa on these same drums, the music reflected the symbolism surrounding the principal deities of the cult—

since these deities have a dual character, all ceremonial phases of their worship have a dual character, including the music which is divided into two parts, "the first part slow and deliberate in a syncopated two-four time, the second a series of triplets making a much faster, unsyncopated, four-four beat." It is in ways such as this that the close integration of music with religion is most clearly manifested.

Possession Ceremonies

THE phenomenon of possession in African and African-derived religions has often been noted, but the role of music in stimulating it seems usually to be taken for granted. In view of its importance it is surprising how few real studies of possession in Africa are available, and the investigation of music in its relationship to possession is practically unknown. Possession is a social phenomenon, in which a certain drum rhythm, hand-clapping or singing by a chorus, or the shaking of a particular rattle pattern is almost invariably essential if it is to occur.

The various patterns of rhythm or song are, of course, peculiar to the culture in which the possession pattern is shaped, and will not necessarily be successful in another culture. Possession for the most part occurs at a ceremony where the individual follower of a particular god is moved by drumming, singing and dancing of his group, the god comes to him, and he becomes t god, dancing, acting, speaking a performing in the ways known to peculiar to the deity who has tak possession of him.

Herskovits (*Myth of the Ne Past*, New York, 1941) has poin out further that in the process release from possession the dru play an important part, for th "must continue to beat the rhyth of the god until all those under spell have come to themselv otherwise, their own spirits mi not return and the consequen would be disastrous. Furthermo were drumming to stop abrup the often dangerous positions which those possessed find the selves, high in a tree or atop a ro for example, would cause them suffer." It is the musical system a its performers, then, through wh possession is induced, maintai and released.

Thus Rouch, in speaking of Songhay (*Les Songhay*, Paris 19 lists the agents of the Holey cul the "faithfuls," the dancers, women who organize the dan three different priestly groups, the musicians who play the vari musical instruments involved sing the songs upon which pos sion is dependent.

Again, Herskovits points out *Dahomey*, that the *vodu* (god) "will come . . . except on the day aside for him to do this, and t only before the cult-house, to

nd of the drums, and after necessary sacrifices have been de. At the same time . . . h *vodunsi* . . . realizes the effect, him, of the songs and drum-rthms sacred to his god. Thus one occasion, when a singer s asked to record songs for the ke deity, Da, he refused because was himself a *dansi*, and when others offered to sing these in his place, he himself left before they were begun, the explanation being that were he to hear the songs sacred to his deity he would become possessed." Other examples of similar phenomena could be cited, but the fact of the established role played by music and musical instrument in possession is clear.

UGANDA WITCHCRAFT, 1957

A case of mass black-magic was unfolded before a court at Buddu, Uganda at the end of April, 1957, when a school girl and her ents were tried under Uganda's anti-witchcraft laws.

As reported by the Associated Press, an African schoolmaster testified t his school had to be closed when thirty pupils, as well as their parents, re bewitched into falling into trances. The trouble arose because children made fun of the girl, a new pupil at the school.

The girl reported it to her parents, who called in a witch doctor in er to get revenge. According to the story of the schoolmaster, the t day when two children began to laugh at the new girl, they fell o trances. The girl demanded money before she would restore them their senses. Then she picked some leaves, mixed them with water d anointed the victim's heads. They promptly recovered.

The next day the girl demanded more money, but the schoolmaster eatened to call the police. After this thirty of the pupils began to ve uncontrollable seizures. Two African priests were witnesses to the ne. They told in court that children who were sitting in class would ddenly rush out and start running around the playground "so fast t they seemed to be flying."

Some scaled high walls, while others were found in nearby trees, hang- from slender branches which normally would support "only a bird." hen the children were taken home, it was discovered that their parents o were suffering from seizures.

A local witch-hunter searched the house of the girl who had started trouble and he found a collection of instruments and herbs. When these re destroyed, the mass seizures ceased. The girl was ordered to re-ve 12 strokes of the cane and her parents were sentenced to five years prisonment by the magistrate of the court.

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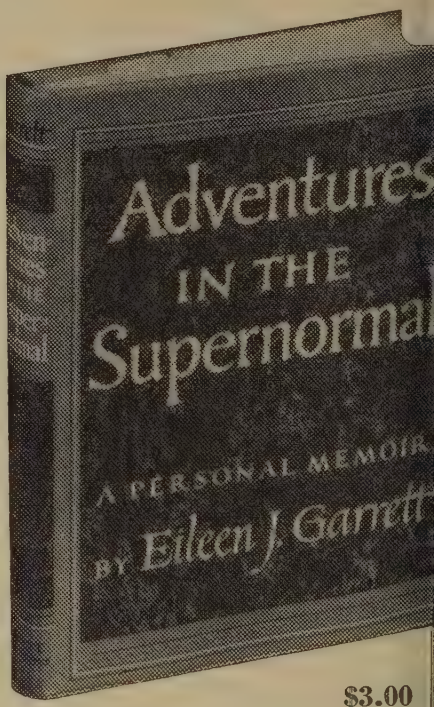

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small matters, magic and medicines will serve; in greater airs the ancestoral spirits advise, but beware the genii!

ELIGION AND MAGIC MONG THE MENDE

Kenneth Little

my quest for information about he religious beliefs of the nde, of whom about one million in the Sierra Leone Protector- and Liberia, I often tried to over their ideas about God. nat," I used to ask, "is he "

he most straightforward answer ceived came from the middle- l head of a rice farming house- ; rice is the staple crop of the nde. We were reclining in ham- ks in his compound, sipping n wine, and I had gradually ked the conversation, some- what against his will, in that direction. He replied, that, of course, the Mende believed in "God"; but no one knew what he was like, because no one had ever seen him.

European visitors to Mendeland usually describe its inhabitants as a friendly, easy-going people who adapt themselves readily to social change. The average Mende person is dark brown in complexion, of slightly more than medium height, and has a broad nose and black "woolly" hair. This means that the Mende are a Negro group whose racial characteristics

are shared with the other Negroid peoples of the West African coastal area and the western Sudan.

Very little is known about their origin, although it is possible that they were forced out of the latter region several centuries ago by the westward drive of the conquering Fulani, nowadays the ruling class in northern Nigeria. The present habitat of the Mende, the central and southeastern part of the Sierra Leone Protectorate and adjacent area of Liberia, consists largely of tropical rain forest. The Mende population is divided among some seventy separate little "states," or chiefdoms, each of which is autonomous.

But to get back to my informant's view of "God." His response illustrates one of the principal problems of the anthropologist. He is often tempted for the sake of clarity and coherence to impute dogma that may be far more precise and concrete than the actual nature of indigenous belief. Another point, so far as some African peoples are concerned, is that their attitude towards such matters is essentially pragmatic. They are interested in the supernatural world, but mainly as it affects their practical requirements and everyday needs—good crops, the fertility of women, protection against illness and misfortune.

In that regard, I remember talking to some Mende villagers about a visit paid them by a Christian missionary. He had pounded the merits of the Christ way of life and had spoken "nice to them, and so they had agreed become Christians providing would build them a school. I a heard of another missionary, w invited questions from his Me congregation, after preaching them. Instead, however, of us this as an opportunity for theolo cal discussion, the people as him to explain why the price their farm produce was so low.

Ancestral Spirits, Links with God

THERE is no question, h ever, as my inform stressed, of the Mende not lieving in "God," or a Supre Being. This Supreme Being crea the universe and everything in He then retired far away into sky, although not entirely out of reach of men. He is still approa able, mainly through the medi of ancestral spirits. Ancestral spi are the spirits of dead mem of the family. The Mende bel that an individual's personality vives death and that it tra (somewhat as in Greek mythol across a river into the land of dead. There, the spirit appear carry on activities very simila those of the living members of family with whom it keeps clo in touch.

These ancestral spirits appea the living, usually in dreams, are addressed in much the s

as are the senior members of group by their juniors in real The object of such visitations generally to scold or to offer ice, for the ancestral role is lary. Misfortune suffered per- ally, or by the family as a up, is a sign of ancestral dis- asure. It indicates that the per- concerned should examine r consciences, as we would say. he implication is that there has n some breach of family dis- ine, that some relative has n wronged, or that the ancestors nselves have been neglected. rmony between the living and dead must be restored, and this he responsibility of either the d of the household, or a special nber of it — the "praying man." he method generally adopted "feed" the ancestors. This is e at the appropriate shrine, ted, perhaps at the foot of a e cotton-tree between whose s a small wooden shrine is tructed. The family meets there group and a fowl and some are brought forward. The on in charge of the ceremony calls the names of the ances- taking care not to omit any. is a question of curing a sick on who is ill, it is assumed, use he has offended the an- rs in some way, "red rice" ed. This is rice mixed with a al red-colored palm oil. In case, two pieces of tobacco lso offered, and a supplication in words like the following is made on the "offender's" behalf:

"*Ah, grandfathers, I have come to you: Momo is the one who is ill. The soothsayer informs me that you are angry with him because he has not 'fed' you for a long time. Do you, grandfathers, kindly pardon him. He is a small boy; he has no senses yet. I have come now to beg you. . . . . Every day that passes, we ask that you people should always be our leaders and should not leave us unprotected.*"

(From K. L. Little, *The Mende of Sierra Leone*, London, 1951).

Rice Ceremonies

SOME Mende families do not make this kind of sacrifice without special cause, but farming requires additional offerings which are quite routine. Indeed, from the point of view of traditional belief, certain magico-religious procedures are as essential to the production of a crop as the manual task itself. This may be because of the central importance of rice in Mende life.

Consequently, nearly every farming operation is preceded or accompanied by a ritual act. This is designed to insure the safety and welfare of the workers themselves, as well as to prosper their labors and protect the growing crop against witches and other malevolent forces. The Mende practice "shifting cultivation," and this necessitates the selection of a fresh farming site each year.

It is considered imprudent, however, to clear the area of forest chosen without the approval of the spirits. The land belongs as much to them as to the living — the main reason, incidentally, why family property of this kind may never be alienated. And so before anything is done the farmer must inform the ancestors of his plans. The trees are then felled, but further notice must be given ceremonially before the debris can be burned.

Although the plot is now ready for cultivation, it cannot be successfully sown without supernatural assistance, and so the party which is to hoe in the seed assembles at the entrance to the farm. There they construct a temporary shrine over which the farmer himself sprinkles the blood of a slaughtered fowl, whilst the others imitate the planting of rice. The farmer then prays aloud, calling especially upon those ancestors which have a high reputation as agriculturists.

Finally, before the crop can be harvested, some rice is taken from the part of the farm which was first sown. This is cooked, but not eaten, and is dedicated to the spirits by the "praying man," who says, "We have brought you this rice. Let not the rice left in our hands be used in a bad way. Look after our children, our wives; let no bad thing fall on us." Harvesting can then begin.

Genii—Nature Spirits

IN addition to ancestors, Mende believe in the existe of nature spirits of an anth pomorphic kind, known as ge The more important of these g have a personal identity and t of temperament similar to thos human beings. Indeed, it is tem ing to suppose that this partic kind of spirit represents a psyc logical projection of the Me character itself upon the su natural world.

The most widely known g lives on the top of a mountai day and wanders about the fo at night. He appears as a man w a white skin and a long w beard to lonely travelers whom entices off their path by ask them conundrums. However, traveler is generously rewar with gifts if he proves hi the genie's match. It is neces similarly to keep one's wits a one when dealing with ano genie who is of the opposite She appears as a beautiful siren woman with a soft white s and is seen sometimes perched rock parting her hair with a go comb. If you manage to sn away her comb, you may be position to exploit her to advantage. You must compl disregard all her flattery and treaties to return her comb, w should be burned, and its a placed in your fire-place.

Genii, in other words, are not lt with in the same ordered as the ancestral spirits. Initia- is essential, but if it misfires, person concerned may find self in the genie's power, obliged ollow the genie's wishes instead is own.

The relationship which genii posedly have with human beings etimes includes sexual inter- se, and even appears to condi- certain types of mental de- gement. For example, there a case some years ago of a nde boy who killed his father he instigation, the young man ned, of two genii. According he boy's own explanation of a ie as abhorrent to the Mende o us, the genii appeared before with swords and threatened ill him if he did not carry out command.

al "Medicines"

s an extra safety-device on the , certain special "medicines" used whose function is to pro- the workers from injuring nselves and each other while ing and felling the forest. se medicines consist of a concoc- of certain leaves and water which each worker is ex- ed to dip his axe or machete, "immunizing" it, before going n the morning.

Medicine," in fact, plays a iderable part in Mende life, it involves an interesting metaphysical concept. In the general sense, it represents a special kind of supernatural power or quality, which becomes attached to a given object through the influence of the Supreme Being. The object in question then becomes capable of "magical" use. Its physical nature is relatively unimportant. Thus, a bunch of feathers, the horn of a goat, or even an old razor blade, are all things which can be put to a supernatural purpose, once they have become impregnated in this way.

For example, there is a medicine for checking the veracity of witnesses in court, the belief being that the medicine will be helped by the Supreme Being to punish an individual who swears a false oath. Other medicines are used to protect property from thieves, to detect criminals, to prevent sickness, to ward off witches, to enamor a member of the opposite sex, and to bring personal success and prosperity.

There is nothing to prevent any one owning and using such medicines, although their employment is not to be undertaken lightly. A number of powerful medicines, in particular, need great skill and special qualities of temperament. These may be compared to electric batteries of high voltage—they are charged with energy—and, like electricity in our own society, may be highly dangerous in the hands of an amateur.

The latter point explains the existence among the Mende of a special category of person, known as medicine men and witch doctors. The former term is self-explanatory, but a witch doctor is a person specially equipped to deal with witchcraft and to provide antidotes against it. These people are looked upon as useful members of society, but there are other practitioners of the supernatural, known anthropologically as sorcerers, who use "bad" medicine. Some of these "bad" medicines gain their power through being "fed" on human flesh.

A senior British official had reputed possession of one of these "cannibal" medicines, while I was in Mendeland. This, according to rumor, was the source of his extraordinary knowledge of native affairs. So strong was belief in his evil powers that people hastily took refuge in their homes if he went out in his car at night.

Secret Societies

HOWEVER, the owners of the most powerful medicine among the Mende are certain associations, known as secret societies. The most important of these groups are the Poro, or men's society, and the Sande, or women's society. Other secret societies, such as the Humui, have both men and women as members. By their possession of so much supernatural power and their ability manipulate it, these groups in a position to control a la part of Mende life.

For example, the Poro has cha of the initiation and general tr ing of all the young men of tribe. No male individual is allo to marry who is not a Poro initi Similarly, no girl is regarded a to be a wife and a mother u she has graduated from Sa The Poro also has a decisive v in politics. A chief must be a l man, and succession to the c taincy and other important of are largely determined within secret councils of the society. W a dispute between leading mem of the tribe arises, it is not hear public, but before a tribunal o Poro. In former days, too, Poro acted as an arbiter in l wars. It would send a party d senior officials who, garbed carved wooden masks and carr other symbols of the society, regarded as supernatural s with power to destroy anyone opposed them.

I had many personal experi of the awe in which the Po held. I happened on one occ to make a casual reference t society while visiting a ce paramount chief. The next m ing I learned that he had se messenger nearly twenty mil dead of night to warn the where I was lodging not to dis any Poro "secrets" to me.

The medicine of the Sande so-
ty is used mainly in connection
th women's affairs. For example,
e miscarriage of a pregnant
man is looked upon as danger-
s to the fertility of other women,
d so Sande medicine is used to
rify the town in this kind of
entuality. Needless to say, it
a very serious offence for any
n to trespass on the premises of
e society, and even Sande mem-
rs themselves risk illness if they
proach too closely to the Sande
dicine. This is hidden away in a
ner of the head woman's house.
The Humui society's ownership
medicine gives them control over
rriage and mating, which are
gulated primarily by Humui laws
her than consanguinity. Breach
certain of these laws is tanta-
unt to incest and necessitates the
rification not only of the two
rsons concerned, but of their
mediate kin. In general terms,
s "incestuous" for a man to have
ual relations with any close
atives on his father's side of
e family, with any descendant
his own mother; and with any
se relatives of his existing wives.
addition, the Humui prohibits
ual intercourse with a girl under
e age of puberty, and with any
man who is nursing a child.
her "sexual" offenses are for a
other to sit on his sister's bed, or
ister on her brother's bed. The
mui also has rules of sexual
giene. For example, a woman
must not come into the presence of any relatives of the man with whom she has had intercourse, until she has washed in the morning.

Breach of these Humui rules is supposed to bring sickness and misfortune to a degree varying with the offense. The only way of remedying the matter is for the person concerned to confess his or her guilt to an official of the society. A fine must also be paid. It is then up to the head woman of the Humui to free the parties concerned of their "sin." This necessitates an elaborate ceremony, which includes sprinkling the special herbal medicine of the society over the heads of the wrong-doers. They are then regarded as ritually whole again, and go down to the river to bathe.

Traffic Noise vs. Genii

NOWADAYS, more and more young Mende people are being educated in schools, and so it is difficult to say how far all these traditional beliefs and practices still survive. According to fairly common report the genii, for example, appear less frequently than they used to do. They have been driven away, it is said, by the noise caused by automobile traffic. On the other hand, some vivid accounts of personal experience of these creatures have often been given me by boys at high school.

Probably few educated people continue to pay serious attention

to the ancestral spirits, but this does not mean that they have necessarily given up practices of a magical kind. The effect, in some cases, has been to combine Christian and ancestral worship. I remember being taken out to an ancestral shrine, some distance up a wooded hillside, where I was "introduced" to the spirits in turn. My intermediary was a man who assisted the local Christian missionary with his ritual offices. Indeed, a few hours before this incident took place I had watched him taking part in the celebration of Mass as a server.

Life under modern conditions contains less certainty, in some ways, for the average Mende person than it did in tribal society. It is not surprising, therefore, to find Mende sometimes still reso ing to talismans and similar devic Some of these charms are used such practical purposes as securi their owners—as clerks—a rise pay or promotion.

Another magical instrument, lated more to tribal life, appears be a fairly recent invention. T is the "witches' cloak." It fits visibly over its owner's shoulde and, like the equally magi formulae of successful salesma ship in our own society, it has effect of impressing an individua personality upon all beholde The "witches' cloak" is purcha on occasion in Mendeland, considerable cost, by candida anxious to demonstrate their qua fications for a vacant chieftaincy

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ındor Fodor

IEDICINE MAN 'SYCHOANALYZED

'EW things furnish better evidence of the essential soundss of the analytic approach to the man psyche than the successful ychoanalysis of primitives. What orge Devereux described in *ality and Dream: Psychotherapy of a ains Indian* (New York, 1950), ılf Sachs has done remarkably ll with a Rhodesian medicine n called John Chavafambira, in ıannesburg, during the years eceding the second World War. Sach's book, entitled *Black Anger* rove Press, New York. 324 pp., per-bound is, however, more n the analytic story of a nganga (diviner and herbalist). It also presents a terrible sociological study of the oppression of the black people of Africa. It is both a contribution to the psychology of primitive healers and a call to the conscience of the world.

There is a good deal of parallelism between the work of medicine men and modern mediums. As a medium relies on the spirits of the dead in his services to the living, so is the medicine man dependent on the midzumi, his ancestral spirits. There is, however, one essential difference. The ancestral spirits do not move to "Summerland," they

"continue to live in the places where they live in the flesh . . . and are in constant, intimate contact with the living. The dead and the living form a chain that must not be broken. There is no division of the worlds between them, and the idea of hell or 'the other world' is utterly incomprehensible to them."

A medium cannot tell his own future. John Chavafambira could not throw the bones for himself. Just as gypsies will have their palms crossed with silver and many mediums expect their fee, so does the medicine man, even in a more pointed manner, demand payment as the essential preliminary to inspiration. We have repeated statements to the effect that the ancestral spirits get angry when they are not paid, the nut shells won't talk unless they see money first, and the doctor will tell his medicines that they should not be effective if the client fails to keep his promise.

John was 36 years old when his analysis began and through the method of free associations the treatment lasted for two and a half years. He came from Manyika land in Southern Rhodesia and was the descendant of generations of witch doctors. At the beginning of the book he had not been initiated ritualistically in his father's practice, because his father's spirit told him that he was too young to practice for "the lust of the body made the calling dangerous. The sweet firm line of a young girl's brea may cause him to betray his tru A young man, in anger, might u his medicine to kill and not cure" . . . something he shou have remembered when the b trayal of the trust caused the dea of a man and nearly cost him h own life. "For the young to lear for the mature to practice" we words of wisdom that he could n fully appreciate until he tasted h own cup of sorrows.

Rain-Making by Sorcery

THE first time he put his know edge to use to smoke out witch was at a kraal where sorce was believed to be the cause of three-year drought that was slow killing both humans and anima Reminiscent of ancient magic practices, he needed the particip tion of a six-year-old boy for h rain-making ceremony. "It mu be a young child," he asserte "one who has not yet sinn against Mwari, our God."

Stark naked, both paced to a fro around the kraal, "subtly a secretly so that the witch shou not be aware of their activities . . John carried a small bag of roc rabbit skin, very smooth to t touch. In this lay the horn contai ing the medicines: the roots ca fully dug, the powdered leav sedulously prepared, the skillfu mixed fats of animals. First, Jo put a little of the oil from the ho on his forehead, and then p

me on the boy. The oil was to ake them immune from the urowi, the umthakathi, as the eople of the Transvaal call the itch. Next, he took his buffalo tail nd splashed the oil on his foot nd on the foot of the child. Should ie umthakathi come in the form f a cat or baboon, he and the child ould be able to stand their ground, ecure in this protection. The uthor reports as follows:

"The child then sprinkled water ound the huts. John stood still. Ie was talking inwardly to his mily midzumi, to his father's, havafambira's spirit. 'You cannot lk to spirits in the ordinary way,' e explained to me. 'You just talk a hum, with your lips hardly oving, so that no one can notice our talk.' And the father soon oke to him from within himself. ohn feels his father right inside mself when he talks to him.) ohn turned to the boy. 'You ustn't be afraid. The umthakathi nnot hurt you because you have one nothing wrong against the ead people. So my father told me. ow I will give you the medicines. hey will be very strong, because ou are clean and fresh. You are cky, and so will the medicines om your clean hands be lucky and rong.'

"They both bent and touched e earth.

"The child dug the first hole. He made it with a small sharp stick, whimpering a little as he worked. John opened the bag of soft brown rabbit skin—the bag that his father had used, and drew out the horn. The child put his forefinger and thumb into the mouth of the horn. Only in such a way must the medicine be touched. (I have seen this medicine. It is a soft, fatty, pastelike substance of a grayish-brown color, with a sour smell.) The child thrust this into the hole, filled in the hole again, and smoothed it with his feet. John hovered beside him, watching, like a bird of prey on still wing.

"They moved on, repeating the performance, ringing the kraal in an encompassing circle. The little boy filled thirty or forty holes, each hole the size of a man's thumb. Then John was sure that the poisoner had been leashed. He put the medicine horn reverently back in his father's bag and sent the child back to his hut . . .

" 'I stood very still, listening attentively to my father's voice that was so pleasing to my heart. My father was pleased with me. He said that rain would come. And the same night, Doctor, I was awakened from a dream by lightning and thunder. The lightning was so strong, it looked to me like a black ox in the sky flicking his white tufted tail. And in no time the strong rain came.' "

"I Shall Be Rich"

THE ceremony was repeated two more nights and each night there was a terrific downpour. A remarkable story of rainmaking. But Wulf Sachs had his reservations. John invariably confused past and present events and unconsciously reconstructed stories in sequential form. Sachs said:

"I was naturally sceptical of such a prompt response on the part of Nature to a witch doctor's ritual, but I dare not inquire for fear of arousing John's suspicion. Rain might have come that morning, as on the previous night, simply because it was the end of spring and the beginning of the rainy season in the Transvaal. I have found out from other witch doctors that they give careful study indeed to the realities of life. None of them would undertake to make rain in the Transvaal in July, for there is not the slightest chance of it in midwinter."

The lightning that preceded the rain awakened John from a dream in which he and the little boy were collecting eggs from nests in the grass. They filled four baskets and all around them scores and scores of black hens were running. "It was such a good dream," John said. "To dream of eggs and the number 4 is so lucky . . . Plenty of fowls, that means plenty of patients. I shall be a famous doctor and have plenty of patients an cattle and plenty of children, I sha be rich."

The interpretation would d credit to a professional analys Eggs certainly carry the potential unfolding life and four is square right. Plenty of fowls, for an Africa native, means wealth. So ne morning John killed a black chicke to his mother's and father's spiri

"I felt very happy when I wol up, for I had my father's bag an my father's horn with me. I wishe I had my father's stick . . . "

The stick was in the shape of woman. In a hole inside his fath put medicines, oil and all kinds fats. The stick would talk an explain everything to John's fathe "If a thief came by day or nigh the stick told my father." U fortunately, only he who put th medicine into the stick could he it talk. So we may safely assun that the voice of the talking sti was another internal voice.

Yet, on one occasion when Joh consulted Emily, a woman wit doctor, we have a description something that is similar to th direct voice of the seance roo Emily talked to the spirits in thin, high-pitched whisper, like winter wind blowing through tiny crack. John listened intentl The ngoma's eyes closed. Sudden they opened again, deep-set glin mering bulbs pushed into her gre puffed face. She told John he w lucky, the spirits were talking fro

e top of the room for him. Closing r eyes again she continued her iistling whisper. It seemed to hn, he told Sachs afterwards, that other sound mingled with her iisper—a sound which seemed to m "like the dropping of water om a distant rivulet, faint but ear, distant, yet refreshing."

nens Are Everything

BEING a medicine man did not protect John from fear. Omens ounded everywhere. A horse got to the yard and cropped the ass around John's room. It meant at somebody wanted to poison m. On top of it, a black snake as seen to crawl over the steps of e room and disappear in the ishes nearby. John was now sure at there would be trouble with e dead.

The birth of twins was regarded a great calamity in John's tribe. ney believed that twins come om two fathers, one of whom as not a real man but a sorcerer some other evil doer. "That's w baby wizards are begotten. woman sleeps with her husband d becomes pregnant. The wizard en sleeps with her, without the oman being aware of it, and ves her another child. A clever tch doctor can find out through e bones which is the real child d which the wizard baby. But ould there be no diviner avail- le, both babies are killed. Usually e midwife herself strangles them." If a baby cut his two upper teeth before cutting the lower ones, it had to be killed to ward off a disastrous omen. Illnesses are sent by the ancestors, evil doers or bad luck. Bad luck is a tangible thing. The first thing a doctor has to do is to find out the patient's fortune. "It is no good treating a patient who has bad luck, unless you can change it beforehand. There are three ways of fortune telling. The very first is the use of the horns. Then the throwing of six nutshells. And last the throwing of the bones." Only after that could the patient be given medicine. But this witch doctor, says Wulf Sachs, "had no knowledge of any single medicine he used, neither did he understand the indications which were mostly vague and of a general character. The same herb or the same root was used in various diseases, the ritual of administration being the only part of the treatment that was changed.

"The horns were made of clay, in a conical form, about three inches long and an inch wide. One was the male, the other, slightly smaller, was the female horn. He would put the horns into a calabash and they would begin to move. (He appeared to hold the calabash tightly, but I found out that the wrist was loose and gently shaking, so that actually he made the horns move according to his wish. The patient, of course, was not aware of this; to him, the horns were

moved by supernatural forces.) It was necessary to rub the horns thoroughly on his hands and on the patient's forehead so as to establish a contact between the patient and his ancestors. Then, after all this ceremony, he would interpret the movement of the horns entirely at random, for each time, no matter how they moved, he would give a totally different reading."

There is here a similarity between this technique and the movement of the table in mediumistic history by unconscious muscular exertions. Rubbing the horns, of course, is similar to the process of magnetization of the speaking trumpet.

"You are mistaken, Doctor," said John "if you don't believe in bad luck. If your dead people are against you, you can do nothing."

Treating Bad Luck

IN psychoanalytic practice one might say that there are two kinds of people: accident-prone and accident-proof. People who have bad luck may belong to the accident-prone class. That is not far removed from treating bad luck. In Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* they jailed the people who got sick. They were responsible for it. So may the psychic pattern of a neurotic be responsible for his bad luck. What analytic treatment tries to eliminate by digging into the unconscious, John tried to remove by suggestion therapy. He was not a bad psychologist and was stirre by pity and compassion. He obeye an inner urge in practicing h hereditary calling: the desire help and cure. He was critical the white doctors: "How can suc people cure when they show n sorrow for the sick?"

When John reached the critic age of 30, his father came to hi in a dream and took him to th top of a mountain and showed hi the medicinal roots which he ha dug out. Then he showed him number of goats, telling John count them. "He counted ther but when he had reached abo thirty, he woke up shivering wi excitement. At last! Here was th message, obvious enough for a son go dig your roots, practice as doctor, for now you are thirt the prescribed age."

Wulf Sachs gives us quite a fe instances of uncanny identificatio between John's interpretation dreams and Freudian dream sym bolism. John's wife dreamed angels one of whom was attackin her with a big knife. John sai "Knife is a bad thing in a drea One can kill with it. It mea danger. It means I shall sleep wi my wife very soon . . . I can fe that my wife wants to sleep with man."

There is a difference between medicine man and a witch docto The witch doctor knows the art poisoning, a medicine man on knows the art of healing. John, f

long time, kept himself clean. his medicines did not work, mebody spoiled them, or the atient was a fool. "No medicine n help a fool." As long as he kept s hands clean, all went well. The hite doctor cooperated with him nd treated him as an equal—hich pleased John's ego im-ensely.

The white doctor supplied him ith aspirin, cough mixture, tonics, vitamins. But the white doctor ould not keep a constant eye on m. John deviated from his former oral ideals and, moved by mo-ves of jealousy, gave advice that sulted in a case of murder, rried out by two of his clients.

John returned to his home coun-y, his native kraal. But he was no nger welcomed by his mother, ncle and brothers. Oriented to s new life in the city, he had eglected and even forgotten many the old taboos. It was no longer ossible for him to fit into the old ciety. After some months he re-rned to the crowded conditions war-time South Africa.

His experience points to a saddening, though true, realization. Whatever form of therapy is used, we lose our former self. John had far outstripped his own people. He found out, much to his chagrin, that spiritual advancement always exacts a heavy price—the price of loneliness. So, in graphic form is demonstrated the conflict of the modern African, reaching out to new ideas in the white man's culture, and struggling with the traditions and beliefs of his parents and ancestors.

The story of this turbulence and the seething of the oppressed vast black population is well told by Wulf Sachs. To John Chavafambira finally came the answer that he must work for the education and betterment of his brothers through the settlement of tribal differences—the petty jealousies which precluded cooperation in solving their larger problems. To this, through the culture to which the white doctor had opened his eyes, he decided to dedicate his future life.

A person who is possessed by the spirit of a zar takes on a entirely new personality, even speaking a different langua

ETHIOPIA'S LANGUAGE OF THE POSSESSED

Wolf Lesla

THE official religion in Ethiopia is Christianity, a part of the Ethiopian population are Moslems, others, called Falasha, are of Jewish faith, still others are pagans. Whatever their religious beliefs, Ethiopians have in common a belief in the spirit called zar. The name is of non-Semitic origin, probably derived from the name of the supreme divinity of the pagan Cushites, the God-Heaven called in Agau *ğar*. This ancient pagan god is regarded in Christianized Abyssinia as a malevolent genius. Although the official church, Christian or Moslem, condemns the belief in zar and the practices connect with it, the current opinion is th everyone "has a zar."

The origin of zar is said to back to Eve or, according to a other tradition, to the Empe Kaleb. Eve had thirty childr When God came to pay her a v and to count her children, H feared the accusation of lust according to others, the evil e and therefore hid fifteen of most beautiful children. God kn of it and, as punishment, decr that the hidden children should main so all their life, while visible children remained visi

ar originates from the hidden ildren.

The other tradition says that mperor Kaleb (who reigned from 14 to 542) divided his kingdom mong his sons so that one of them ould reign in the daytime, and e others at night. Zar originates om the sons who reigned at night.

As in human society there are mong the zars kings, chiefs, ser- ants, and so on. There are Christ- n, Moslem, and pagan zars. ar plays an important part in ative life. All diseases are at- ibuted to and emanate from it. ars are male and female; the male ones are considered more angerous. A woman is most often ossessed by a male zar, a man by a male zar. Generally, women are ore often possessed than men, nd it seems that the mother is the cipient of the zars of the whole mily.

THERE are particular periods of the year when zars appear nd strike. In fact, they make their ppearance with the festival of the ross, at the end of September, hich marks the end of the rainy ason. It is a time "when the owers start to bloom and the aize to ripen." During the rainy ason zars remain hidden. The mes when zars are likely to strike e midday, sunset, and between idnight and three o'clock in the orning. They appear near rivers and waters, in desert and bushy places in general.

The person possessed by the zar is called *yäzar färäs*, "the zar's horse." When a person is hit by a zar he goes to the house of a healer called *balä zar*, "the master of zars." The *balä zar*, himself possessed by zars, dominates them and is able to discover their nature. Other persons forming a fraternity come to the gathering. Some assistants beat the drums, others sing songs and clap their hands, while the *balä zar* "investigates" the nature of the zar. He attempts to persuade the possessed person to make the *gurri*, that is a movement of the head, which is vertical or perpendicular depending on the nature of the zar. This movement is executed in a frenetic manner and repeated for quite some time. The *gurri* indicates that the zar has consented to "descend" and that he will eventually reveal his name and nature. The possessed person who executes the *gurri* is in a state of trance, and through his medium the zar emits the *fukkara*, a warrior-like boasting, by which he reveals his identity. Once the zar's nature is discovered, the *balä zar* asks him to show clemency to the possessed person, and to come back to her at fixed periods only. This is the most that can be asked of the zar since it seems that he never leaves a person completely. In exchange, he is promised an animal sacrifice, as well as trinkets and attire to be

worn, of course, by the possessed person.

It might be interesting to hear a rationalistic explanation of the zar institution given to me by an Ethiopian who was educated in France. His explanation runs as follows:

In former days the women and young girls of Ethiopia never went out alone; they were always followed by servants. They could not, therefore, go to places and enjoy themselves at their wish nor could they have love affairs unless with the consent of their parents. They, therefore, invented the existence of the zar, a so-called illness which does not exist and never has existed. Since the parents or husbands did not wish to aggravate the illness of their daughters or wives, they gave them liberty to go to gatherings where they met playmates, permitted them to put on new dresses, and in general fulfilled all their whims.

One of the convincing proofs of my informant that the zar institution is a pure invention is the fact that, according to what people say, the zar appears only in the dry season. "If you ask why no one is possessed by the zar in the rainy season, they will answer that the zar does not leave his dwelling during the rainy season. This alone is enough to show that their illness is a lie." This theory is especially interesting in that it reveals the fact that women possessed by a zar have indeed a freedom fro surveillance at certain accepte times.

I stayed one evening in April 194 with the Falashas of the villag of Ambworo, southeast of Gonda We sat around the fire, the Falash telling folk-tales, when about te o'clock we heard shouts from nearby hut. My young Falash recognized at once that it was zar gathering. We went to th gathering. It was in the hut of woman *balä zar*. She had a bed the back of the hut, screened by curtain, to which she retired fro time to time to rest. She was dresse in clothes of bright colors an adorned with trinkets. The hu was lit by a small fire in the fir place, and was crowded wit women and some young men. Ou arrival passed unnoticed, or, least, did not impress the audienc at all, even when I turned on m flashlight. As we came in, woman was placed opposite th *balä zar* and started the *gurri*. Sh was encouraged by the beatin of drums, by hand-clapping of th audience, and by hoarse screan emitted rhythmically. I heard th *fukkara* but could not get i meaning. After a while the woma retired exhausted, the *balä zar* r turned to her retreat, and th audience was silent. Coffee wa distributed to all the people—I wa given the first cup—and the wome sang melancholy songs. Anoth

possessed woman came forward, ried the *gurri* encouraged by the drums and the hoarse screams which became wilder and wilder, and at a certain point the *balä zar* appeared from her retreat and the zar revealed his identity. This ceremony lasted for nearly the whole night.

In the quiet intervals I heard the women using words the exact meaning of which I did not get, although most of them were Amharic, the language used by the Ethiopians and Falashas of Gondar. Intrigued by this language I went back the next day to the hut of the *balä zar* and met there a woman who had taken an active part in the ceremony. When I asked her about the language she had spoken at the gathering, she replied that she did not know of any particular language, that it was the zar who had spoken, and now that the zar had left her she did not remember this language. I then took with me to my tent a nephew of hers who had been beating the drum at the ceremony and asked him how to express specific words, such as "eat, drink, sit down," and so on, in zar language. For some of them he knew the answer, though he did not know many of them. Moreover, he complained of a headache. It was no wonder since he had played nearly the whole night! I gave him an aspirin and after half an hour he came back relieved of his headache. He asked for some remedy for his aunt who would be willing to give me more information about this language which she knew better than he did. In fact, after I had given her a tablet of aspirin she was willing to answer all my questions and thus I obtained the words of the argot.

When working out the material I noticed that the existence of a language peculiar to zar has been pointed out by Leiris ("Le culte des zars à Gondar," *Aethiopica*, Vol IV, 1934) who indicates that this language is used only by the *wareza*, that is, the servants of the zar and not by the great zars.

THE characteristic feature of this argot is that its uses the general language—that is, Amharic—and the number of "loan words," or words adopted from other languages, is limited. These loan words are from Arabic and Galla, languages with which the Amharas are in contact. The belief in zar is also met with among the Arabs and Gallas—indeed, according to one tradition, the belief in zar is of Arabic origin.

As for the Amharic words, the argot makes use of paraphrase, of metaphors, and of comparisons. "Expressive" words or phrases are used—such as the word "whip" for "hand," used because the hand *holds* the whip; and the word "reed" used for "neck"—by extension, "long neck."

Abstract ideas are expressed by concrete words, general actions by particular ones. Expressions of part for the whole, and vice versa, occur. The form and structure of the argot and the functions of its inflections is that of Amharic.

The custom of speaking in a special language while engaged in religious or secret activities can, of course, be paralleled in other parts of Africa, and in other parts of the world. Its use can easily be traced to the psychological desire to "have something special," or for the members of a group to have some distinguishing characteristics which will set them apart from those who are not initiated.

Thus we can see how the argot of the zar, although employing words and phrases not far different from the everyday speech of the Falashas, is sufficiently different to make the experience of possession a distinguishing characteristic that is closed to those who have not undergone the experience.

Witch Doctor's Apprentice In New York

A doctor from Nigeria, who had been apprenticed to a witch doctor as a boy, received his certificate at New York University's commencement, June 6, 1957. Dr. Christopher Okojie had attended a one year course in general surgery under a Fulbright Fellowship.

A native Nigerian, he was put under the care of a witch doctor at the age of five, but was sent home two and a half years later "because of a poor aptitude for the calling," the *New York Times* reported. The 37-year-old physician went to elementary school, college and medical school in Nigeria. He received his medical degree in 1947. He founded a hospital in the Nigerian uplands in 1950, named the Zuma Memorial Hospital in honor of his mother. The hospital, founded with government help, has only forty-eight beds, but must serve about 21,000 people.

Dr. Okojie believes that some of the herbs used by the medicine men may have genuine therapeutic effectiveness, and may be of interest to modern medical research, although their use and dosage by the medicine men is extremely haphazard. He plans to return to his work at the hospital with his wife, who is a trained nurse, in August

The spirits of the ancestors exert a moral control as well as guidance in daily matters through the mediumship of the nganga

GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE BANTU

Eduardo C. Mondlane

TO understand the attitude of the southeast Bantu peoples ward ancestral spirits, one has o examine their beliefs concerning uman existence in general. The antu believe that human life has o definite beginning or end. When an individual is conceived n his mother's womb, two forces re deemed to have been at work: exual relations between man and oman, and the spirit of an ances- or.

Identification of the child's im- ediate parents is, of course, bvious: he has been born as a esult of their marriage. But the identity of the contributory spirit must be traced through the divining powers of a medicine man. This is done in order to give the child the name of the ancestral kin whose spirit he is believed to embody. The Bantu people thus believe that individuals never die, but that their souls migrate from one state to another, alternating from a spiritual existence to a physical one.

This process must not be confused with the Pythagorean or the Hindu belief in reincarnation, which involves purification of the soul, or degradation of it. In the

Bantu sense, the individual does not necessarily improve or degrade his soul by rebirth. When he reincarnates, he is likely to belong to the same family structure of which he was part before his last death ("passing" is a better translation of the Bantu word). To identify the spirit of a child at birth makes it possible to give him the status held during his previous bodily existence. The idea of a child as a new human being, who must be given a chance to explore life in his own way, is unknown to the Bantu.

Working the Spirits

IN death, the individual's spirit is considered free from the limitations of this physical world. Spirits of the dead are free to move from place to place. It is perhaps due to this belief that many Bantu people find the story of Jesus' resurrection a natural one. A dead man's spirit can enter any house even if it is padlocked. The spirits of the dead are also endowed with power to offset the forces of evil which make human life uncomfortable. Since the spirits are free from the body, they are beyond the reach of hunger, thirst, disease, want, or anything that bothers humans. But at the same time, and perhaps because of this, the spirits are capable not only of warding off evil from pestering the living, but also of providing material and spiritual sustenance for them. Thus, in times of drought and famine, the ancestral spirits are requested to intervene on behalf of the living to provide them with the needed rain and food. When epidemic devastate animal or human life the spirits are asked to come and help. When a village or even a hut is being built, the spirits of the ancestors are invited to help establish the foundations upon which the new dwelling place must be based. In the selection of a wife or a husband, the ancestral spirits are involved. So, also, are they called on when a new plot is cultivated and at the gathering of the first fruits from the fields.

In brief, one might say that the whole of a Bantu's life is enveloped, as it were, by the spirits of the ancestors. This belief must be differentiated from the belief in ghosts and haunted houses typical of Western peoples in the last century. The spirits of the ancestors are not ghostly beings which haunt deserted places and cemeteries. They are rather household companions who share everything with the living and act to protect them.

THE witch-doctor, or medicine man, is the person through whom communication between the individual and his ancestors takes place. It is actually more appropriate to conceive of a witch doctor as a medium, rather than as the traditional evil-doer that

Western people make him out to . The nganga (witch-doctor) emoys a number of methods to comunicate with spirits. There are, owever, two methods which are niversally used among Bantu itch-doctors: *bone-throwing* and *irit possession.* In *bone-throwing,* e witch-doctor collects a number bones of certain animals, such joints of the wild goat, and rtain sea shells. He throws these ones on a mat and by the way ey fall he is able to tell what the ish of the ancestral spirit in uestion is. For instance, by the ay a certain group of bones atter on the mat, the witch-doctor an tell whether the spirit is leased or not; whether it wants rtain kinds of offerings or not; hether it will heal a certain sick erson or not; whether it wants its ame to be given to a newly-born ild or not, and so forth. Most antu witch-doctors use this ethod to decide practically everying that puzzles their clients. hey also can, it is believed, select e kind of medicine appropriate r a certain disease, or even diagose illnesses by this method.

The other method is spirit possion. The witch-doctor, through e use of drums and appropriate ngs, summons the spirit of the ncestor that is most relevant to e situation, and offers it his ody, so that the spirit can more rectly communicate with its living latives. The possessed individual's personality retreats from the scene, to some degree giving place to the spirit of the dead person involved. In many cases, this rather dramatic *appearance* of the ancestral spirit is so convincing that very few people who have witnessed it would doubt its actual occurrence. The seeming reality of it is enhanced by the fact that often the witch-doctor who serves as a medium loses his normal way of expressing himself and acts in the manner of the spirit he *impersonates.* I have witnessed many religious ceremonies where spirit-possession was involved. While I realize the phenomenon involves complex psychological factors, I find it difficult to doubt the sincerity of most witch-doctors whom I have watched closely.

Mediums for Rain

WE have already seen that ancestral spirits among the Bantu of Southeast Africa are believed to possess a great deal of power over the living. But the frequency with which individuals resort to the authority of their ancestors is in direct relation to their needs. As has been shown, ancestral spirits are consulted whenever important decisions have to be made, or when great catastrophes harass the land. One such catastrophe is drought in this agricultural area of Southeast Africa. The people depend on their summer crops and the raising

of cattle and goats for their livelihood. From May to September or October, there is almost no rain. Although some rain falls in March and April, the rainfall most useful to farming comes in November, December and January. If the rains fail in these three months, and this happens every second or third year, that year will undoubtedly be a difficult one for most people. If rain has not fallen by mid-December, the people begin to worry a great deal. It is during this time that many families, clans and tribes prepare elaborate religious ceremonies seeking the aid of their ancestors.

The witch-doctor is consulted first to find out who is responsible for the drought. He may discover that the drought is due to a taboo act which was committed either by a whole group or by an important individual, such as the chief. Sometimes it is necessary to uncover the act, but often it is sufficient to point out that a sin has been committed. The only way by which the people can purge themselves of the sin is by performing ceremonies in which animals will be sacrificed and presents offered to the ancestors. During these ceremonies a number of mediums are asked to act as go-betweens to enable the spirits to participate in person in the festivities. Those ancestral spirits whose names are still known are remembered especially, and their living namesakes are treated with great deferenc Members of the immediate famili of the spirits endeavor to do a those things which they kno specific ancestral spirits liked mos and try to avoid displeasing the in any way.

"The Good Old Days"

WHILE I am not in a positio to judge the success these ceremonies in the past i bringing the needed rain, mo people still believe that most of th time, if not all of the time, th ancestral spirits answer the people prayers. For, almost invariably rain does fall either during o soon after the religious ceremonie It is still common to hear peopl complain, whenever rains fail t fall in the expected months, tha "the gods are angry at us." Con sistent with the age-old tendencie of people to cite "the good ol days" as representing the Golde Age, a great many Africans rebuk those young people who have em braced Christianity and single the out as the source of present diff culties. They say that the spirit of the ancestors are being neglecte in favor of new religions or n religion at all. This will result i tragedy, they warn. Just as Chris tian preachers blame godlessnes for the ills of present Weste society, so the Bantu sages blam the tendency to neglect ancestra spirits in present-day Africa for mos of the problems they face.

The power of ancestral spirits felt not only in affairs affecting ıe larger community, but also in roblems relating to individuals nd families. As has been men- oned, the ancestral spirits are ıe mortar, as it were, with which ıe whole family structure is built. he ethical and moral codes which ictate the general rules controlling ıe behavior of the individual are ound up with the will of these pirits. If an individual commits a rime, it does not hurt him only ; an individual, but it involves ıe wrath of his own ancestors as ell as those of the family or kin- ip-group which he has wronged. nowledge of this fact, in the old ays, used to deter crime and wlessness among the Southeast frican Bantu. It prevented the rong man from bullying the weak nd the unprotected. Individuals elonging to families whose social nd political status was relatively w would have had no means of rotection against ruthless rulers or ıembers of aristocratic families if ıe power of their ancestors to venge them had not been ac- epted as fact.

It is a very common thing today o find a shrine in the home of comparatively highly-situated mily dedicated to an ancestral pirit belonging to a family of sser status. This is done in order o placate the spirit of an in- ividual who, according to di- iners, was killed or ill-treated, or whose kin was killed or ill-treated, by some members of the family. For example, if during an intertribal war an individual was killed by a fighter of the opposite army and his kin captured and subjected to humiliation, it is possible, so the Bantu believe, for his spirit to rise against the conqueror, or against the conqueror's family. The dead man's spirit (not his ghost), is capable of visiting its killer's home and demanding compensation for the loss that its kin has suffered. This compensation may involve another human being—a girl may be given to be the nominal wife of the dead man (often to be married by one of his living kin); or a head or two of cattle, or other valuable object may be given to the injured family. Besides these gifts, the family which has wronged the dead man's kin may be required by a witch-doctor to build a shrine in the dead man's honor, where he will receive presents from time to time. The social implications of this phenomenon are far-reaching, and may endure over many years.

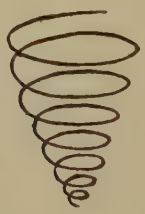
Crime Without Spirits

THREE major points already mentioned should be emphasized here. The first point is that the people of Southeast Africa believe strongly in the indestructibility of the spirit or soul. The whole of their religious life is based on this belief. Secondly, they be-

lieve in intercommunication between the spirits of the dead and the living. This is made possible through the use of medicine-men, witch-doctors or mediums. Thirdly, the whole of the ethical, moral and social structure of the people is built on this general outlook.

However, since the beginning of this century, or slightly earlier in some parts of the region, European ideas contrary to these beliefs have begun to undermine them. From the point of view of those who believe in evolution, or progress, or Christianity, this trend is to be welcomed. Many social scientists blame Christian missionaries for the changes in religious outlook among the Bantu. However, even if Christianity had not been introduced in the area, it is doubtful whether belief in ancestral spirits could have withstood the impact of modern industry. The very fa that a great many men spend mo of their time away from their ki working in industries, would sufficient to shake the basic religio beliefs of a people. It is no wond that belief in ancestral spirits h been in decline during the la fifty years. This decline has affect the moral values of the people, is to be expected. While one ca not assign the rise in criminal b havior totally to the decline in t power of ancestral spirits, the seems to be little doubt that it connected with it.

In spite of recent trends towa agnosticism and sometimes ou right disbelief in ancestral spiri however, the majority of the peop of Southeast Africa remain devo worshippers of the spirits of th ancestors at the present time.



NIGERIA'S IGBO: PATTERNS OF WORSHIP

Ilechukwu N. Njaka

THE Igbo people (also known as Ibo) number about four illion and live for the most part Eastern Nigeria. They are an dependent, aggressive and dyna- c race whose resourcefulness and telligence create awe and at the me time make them indispensable those with whom they deal. It is lieved that the Igbo were once a werful and united people under e central religious authority dis- pted by the slave trade. The uni- rsality with which Nshi, a priestly lt, and Ala, a law-giving deity, erate in Igbo is indicative of ief in a one-united religion.

The Igbo religion is known as *Omenala.* It is an all-embracing religion, as old as the people themselves. Nobody can understand the Igbo without a knowledge of their religion, for Omenala reveals the mental processes of the people.

The God of the Igbo is called *Chukwu* or *Chineke.* It is hard to decipher the real Igbo concept of God. The attitude of the Igbo towards Chineke is like that of a person who was once in close contact with his deity but whose deity has become remote through misunderstanding, and who has now devised other means to con-

tact Him. The Igbo feel that Chukwu is near them; at the same time, they feel that He is too far away. Sometimes they have a notion that they cannot approach God, while on the other hand, they pray directly to Him.

Chukwu literally means The Great God. When He is referred to as the Creator, He is called Chineke (God Who Creates). He is the first Being and the first Cause, a supreme eternal Spirit, an all-pervading Universal Intelligence, Creator of all things and the Sustainer of Life without whom nothing lives. Chukwu is the provider of all things. He needs nothing and to Him no sacrifice is worthy. God has mercifully manifested Himself in many ways and in all things in order that His children, the Igbo (Umu Chukwu), may contact Him. This is why each Igbo man is endowed with a Chi, a personal god which proceeds from the World-Oversoul. Chineke is incomprehensible, hence He has no shrine. Nothing wrought with hands is worthy for the Almighty. Although He is interested in His children, He is not directly concerned with earthly affairs, but He knows all that goes on in the world!

There are also intermediary gods known as the "errand boys" of Chukwu. Like the Igbo man, each is independent, but they can come together whenever necessity requires them to do so—unity diversity to ward off adversi Each is subservient only to Chine —an exact replica of Igbo politi and social structures.

Some gods are smaller than m but they have an advantage o human beings in that they spirits and have access to Chuk They can be cursed by men, w are actually their practical creato These gods are ignored when th seem to be careless in carrying their duties, or when they ma excessive demands of sacrifices order to perform their functio Since they are spirits, they do need material houses.

Omnipotent Ala

THE Igbo have great love nature. Therefore, Ala, mother-symbol, who is also goddess of the land or ear is one of the most import influences in Igbo life. Here idea of a code of laws blends w that of land—an important ment in Igbo life.

Combined with this dual role a constitution and as provider food, Ala is endowed with spirit of God. Each hamlet ha shrine for Ala, an image mol in the form of a woman.

Ala is a medium through wh the living and the dead h communion. Ala is the fount fr which all human morality flo

th: The Vengeful Toad

ONE unusual characteristic is common among the Igbo. ey rarely blame themselves. It ne other person who does wrong, the culprit's spiritual double. example, while many people me man for having forced death on humanity through wrong-ng, the Igbo believe that a dog sent to Chukwu to pray that n might be allowed eternal life earth. A toad overheard this ssage, and as he believed he hated by men, he set out for d's palace firmly determined bring a contrary message. As dog was irresponsibly playing n any animal he met, the toad to the heavens first to tell God t the people of the world had him to ask Chineke to favor m by allowing them to rejoin n whenever He pleased. Chu-u was quick to grant this or as a benevolent Being. The arrived later to give Chineke true message, but Chukwu, time as a resolute unwavering ity, was determined not to nge His word. However, as a ng sympathetic Father, He e man the choice of reincar-on. Along with that, He gave to men to keep them warm and py; that is why the dog has his uth open whenever he runs, to ind men how he had brought to them. And thus woe came to nkind, not by the fault of man, through a combined error of an irresponsible, negligent dog and a cruel, determined, vengeful toad.

As in other religions, the Igbo have their guardian angels in their Chi, a transcendent self, a God personified, or a spiritual double that continues the link between the living and the dead, between Chukwu and man. It guides and protects the individual with whom it is associated. In fact, Chi is not a separate entity from God or man; it is always with Chineke, and man possesses it from the time of his conception. Chi is the essence that makes man a human being.

A man is rich or poor, sick or healthy, lucky or unlucky, depending on how attuned he is to his Chi or whether he collaborates with his Spiritual Double. Apart from a personal Chi there are family Chi and Chi for the hamlet, the village, and the town, respectively. Each Chi performs his work as ordained by the Fountain (Chukwu) in conjunction with and in cooperation with the body to which he is attached.

This is the concept from which Igbo socio-political systems stem. Any one who labors hard is lifted by his Chi. This is why the Igbo believe in individual achievements.

No Igbo community is so stratified that one cannot change his status. Any person, Eze or Okwara (prince), old or young, priest or commoner, can change his social status or can also be punished if found to have contravened the

laws of Ala. Although individual Chi may be under the family Chi, the latter has no firm and rigid control over the former unless the individual Chi is *willing* to cooperate by submission.

Worldly Spirits

OMENALA provides a belief in human survival after death, but not bodily survival. For this reason, funeral rites are performed in order to lead a soul peacefully to the spirit world to rejoin his Fount, although maintaining his identity and, if he had it, his dignity. Then he can reincarnate as often as he desires, but must not change sex. Each person who dies meets his ancestors, who will chastise him, if need be, by ostracizing him until he reincarnates to remedy offenses he has committed against those on earth or their descendants. Although the dead are in the Spirit Land, they take part in the affairs of the Igbo. At death an Igbo joins his Deity and becomes both omnipresence and omniscience.

The Igbo believe in ghosts and there are many stories about them; some fantastic, some believable.

Omenala provides a cult of ancestors. The Igbo believe in their communion with their ancestors; they are so staunch about this that many devout Igbo Christians cannot relinquish this Omenalan psychological satisfaction. The ancestors are not far away fro their children. They are paid d reverence but are not worshipp more than the Catholics worsh the Blessed Virgin. The ancest are asked to help, protect a watch over their kin. They enfor the Igbo code of laws jealously a as a consequence they are associat with Ala. They are the guardians morality and join the living in t ownership of land in order to p serve it for children yet unbo

Another name given to the a cestors is *Ndishi* (those of the sixt that is, the Sixth Sense. They ha shrines called *Ala Ndishi* and ea town has its own. In some la towns, each village has its A Ndishi. It is a cult of past fam heads. A family head has a pl for communicating with his cestors. Ala Ndishi is famous its instantaneous remedial act against anyone who might distu the peace of the society and brought before it. A quick reta tory result is not unusual, an violent death may follow. T belief is strong and the reactio faithful.

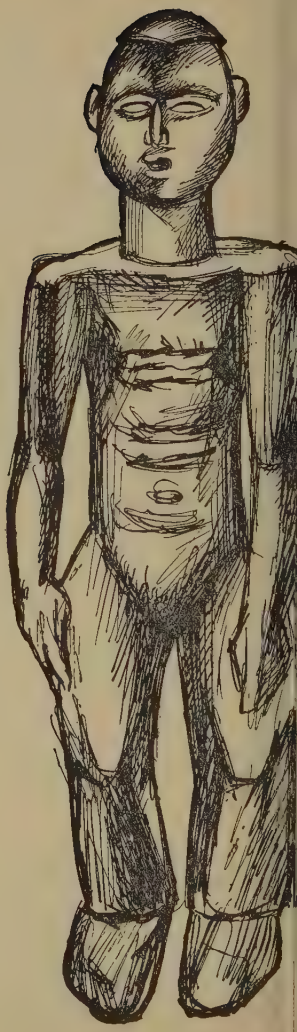
In Igbo society, there are se cults, diviners, seers, *dibie* (docto *Ndi Amuna* (prophets and pro etesses) and—the best know *Ogbanje*. Ogbanje are people, m frequently young boys and g who claim they can die and c back in the same body.

Igbo has doctors or herbalists, ers, diviners, rain-makers, *Oje na* o (traveling doctors) who are id to have visited the Spirit nd, fortune-tellers and many hers. All are called *dibie*. There e also prophets and prophetesses o, at times, give curative medi- ne. Some dibie are exceptionally nsitive in areas of "psi" and their ocess of demonstrating these pow- is known as *Igba-afa*. However, en today Igbo prophets lose emselves in the bush or forest for ny days or weeks in what may called a trance state. They speak foreign tongues, languages hich are spoken by neighboring oups or in languages unknown or recognized. Prophets and proph- sses, once they have carried t their missions, resume their rmal lives and no longer use ange tongues.

A Wealth of Phenomena

IT is not enough to dismiss Omenala as vague, "devilish," "pagan," or "heathen," without knowledge of its beliefs, or because it is not European or Asian or American. Like other religions in other places, it serves a good purpose for the Igbo community. What Omenala requires is a touch of modernity. Many rituals and rites have outlived their useful purposes, while some have long lost their meanings through wrong interpretation, misconceptions and, recently, contempt and neglect. All that is really necessary is a thorough-going reformation in order to bring Omenala into line with twentieth-century life. Then its influence as a moral guide for the society would not be lost, but would be adapted to fit the changing situation of the present time.

ACCUSED OF WITCHCRAFT



Max Gluckman

IN a small Zulu village in Northern Natal, I watched a woman dance frenziedly to force an ancestral spirit which was possessing her to reveal itself. She had been ill for many years, and many Zulu doctors had tried to cure her. At last a diviner had said that she was possessed. Now he hovered about her as she jerked her body spasmodically, trying to force the spirit to give its name so that it could be calmed and domesticated. If that could be achieved, she would become a diviner. The spirit in her would then communi-

te with other ancestral spirits
d would reveal the evil doings
sorcerers and witches. The
eatment failed. The woman died.
The dead woman's husband
ooded over the loss of his wife.
ddenly, he burst out with the
cusation that his older half-
other had used sorcery to kill
r out of envy and hate. I asked
e opinion of a diviner who him-
f hunted sorcerers and witches.
e answered: "This accusation
wrong. Why should the older
other hate his younger brother?
ie older brother has political
wer and controls the main family
rd. His brother thinks his older
other hates him because he hates
older brother."

Two Questions

THIS incident contains the main motives and beliefs that tate an accusation of sorcery or chcraft. An individual suffers ne misfortune, such as the death his wife, and he immediately pects that he has been attacked nefarious means. Equally, he pects that someone who is his my, who has a grudge against n, who hates him, is the agent evil-doing. People who are not olved in the situation, even en they are experts, take a more ective view of the situation: they can see that often the erer "projects" his own hostile ings into the man whom he uses.

I have read that when an African believes he has been bewitched, he sickens and often dies. In my African experience I have come to doubt this. In practice, when an African suffers some misfortune, such as illness or crop failure, he blames it on a witch, against whom he proceeds to take action, as by using counter-magic. But in these situations the witch is not the whole cause of the misfortune. Every misfortune has to be accounted for by the answers to two questions: the first is "how?" and the second is "why?" That is, we may ask, "How did this man die?" and answer "He was run over by a motor car and his skull was fractured." Common-sense observation and medical science give the answer. But there is also the question, "Why did that motor car run over that man at that place at that time?" We may answer, "Chance" —or "fate" or "bad luck" or "God's will," depending on our system of belief. The African may answer, "Witchcraft." When the African answers thus, he is explaining—with the statement, "I am ill because I am bewitched"—why he is ill now, when for some months he has been well and when all his neighbors are still well.

Advancing scientific knowledge may in the end help destroy belief in witchcraft, but it does not answer the African's question as to why some particular individual at a

particular time suffered a particular misfortune.

The belief in witchcraft thus explains the particularity of misfortunes. It does not exclude empirical observation and scientific understanding. On the contrary, witchcraft belief embraces empirical observation and scientific understanding. The witch has to cause misfortune through natural causes—elephants which trample on hunters, snakes which bite them, crop-blights, diseases and so forth; and all these dangerous things exist in their own right.

The natural causes of local misfortune frequently cannot be fought effectively, especially with limited African techniques. The belief in witch craft selects a witch as the most significant cause against which action can be taken. A man suffers misfortune and explains its occurrence by blaming it on a witch; he does not suspect he is being bewitched and therefore suffers a misfortune. Only when he suffers a misfortune will he attempt to locate the witch responsible for it. Africans do not worry, except in a general way, about the identity of witches until they have been attacked.

The Chicken's Reply

THE witch at work is discovered by various kinds of oracles and techniques of divination. No recorded technique of divination will directly name the witch. The most important technique that is used is to feed a su stance, prepared under very spec conditions, to a chicken while qu tions are asked. As the questior framed, the chicken will eit vomit the substance or be kil by it to answer "yes" or "n This substance, which is u throughout Africa, is probably strychnine—for that is a poi whose effects are unpredictal Therefore its operation cannot controlled.

The oracle is used for seve purposes: to decide whether, you take a course of action (s as marrying your daughter some man now), witchcraft affect its success; to select fron number of otherwise equally suita sites for your new homestead that where witchcraft will not prev you from prospering; to dec whether, if you go hunting morrow, you will kill game or prevented from doing it by presence of witchcraft.

Other techniques of divina work similarly. A person may two grooved boards together, w asking questions, and the bo stick for "yes" but continue sli for "no." Or he can put two di ent species of twigs into a ter nest, and "yes" or "no" depend which twig is more eaten by termites. The Zulu consult div in the fashion of our nursery g "Hot or Cold." They go in a p to the diviner who recites a li

ssible—and limited—contin-
ncies which may be troubling
m: something is lost, cattle are
ng, someone is ill. The clients
this time clap their hands in
orus, "We agree, we agree," and
the diviner gets on the trail
y clap more quickly and chorus
re loudly. When he has fixed on,
, illness, he begins to specify:
s a man, it is a woman, it is a
ld, and so on, gradually narrow-
his answers. In the end, on the
is of his knowledge of the
ple and local gossip, and led
his clients, he may name as
erer the one they suspect. If he
s not know them, he indicates,
h their help, whether it is a man
a woman, old or young, related
such-and-such a way to the
cted person. Witch-doctors, too,
k themselves up by dances
magical substances to choose
guilty person from names
ch have been given to them by
sufferer.

and Cold Powers

QUITE clearly in this way a personal enemy of the sufferer lways detected as the source of witchcraft. Therefore early ers on African life described system as fraudulent, and witch-tors as cheats. One of E. E. ns-Pritchard's major contribu-s, in studies of African life, is to w that this supposed "fraudu-lence" is the most reasonable and sensible part of the whole system. For this way of attributing blame makes it clear that witchcraft does not harm people haphazardly, but that the witch attacks people he hates, has quarrelled with, or of whom he is envious. The theory of witchcraft is thus, as well as being a theory of causation, a theory of morals, for witches and sorcerers are bad people, hating, envious, grudging, and spiteful. The sorcerer who goes out of his way to use black magic is clearly immoral.

Tribal ethics do not allow men to charge everyone with whom they have difficulties with bewitching them. A Zulu could not accuse his father or mother, and should not accuse his brothers. Hence people did not believe the embittered man described at the beginning of this account.

Generally, the Africans judge good what we judge good—generosity, hospitality, tolerance, conformity to custom and etiquette, kindness, recognition of obligation. The evil motives which enter into witchcraft and sorcery are the universal evils of hate, anger, envy, and greed.

Thus witchcraft as a theory of causes of misfortunes reflects the personal relations between the sufferer and his fellows, and acts as a theory of moral judgment on what is good and what is bad.

The carved statues of Africa serve religious and psychologic purposes, and act as "containers" for the projection of wish

THE CARVED SPIRITS

Ladislas Seg

SCULPTURE, and its religious and magical functions, has for centuries accompanied the African from cradle to grave. The past half-century has been a period of fading traditions. The African's association with sculpture in the past begins even before birth. In some of the tribes, the African's mother probably possessed a carving to assure her fertility, and another to protect her during labor and childbirth. The new-born child is protected by yet another sculpture; where there are twins, especially among the Yoruba, separate male and female statues are carved for each child's protection.

Masks and statues used dur initiation ceremonies admit a or girl into adulthood. Dur marriage ceremonies, a carved is used. And all through his a life, the adult seeks contact w the spirits of his deceased par through special sculptures function as part of the ance cult.

Carved objects are tradition used in a variety of rituals, suc divination to foretell the fut detect the cause of sickness or prehend criminals. Similar jects assure successful hunting, ing and a good harvest. O are used to cure sickness or i vengeance. Some carvings are

lered abodes of natural forces uch as Shango, God of Thunder nong the Yoruba); others serve nply to assure successful under- kings (such as the Ikenga statues nong the Igbo).

rt of Daily Life

SCULPTURE forms an integral part of African religious and agical rites, and is thus part of ily life. Whereas the West may nsider African sculpture either rely as works of art, or as ethno- gical artifacts, the African con- ers it as implements or tools at are essential to ritual.

Current Western interest lies the high artistic quality and sthetic value of African sculpture. expresses deeply felt emotional perience. The carvings of tal- ted Africans are capable of ng form with such coordination at the "content" of a work can captured easily by the well- ined onlooker.

African sculpture, as we know it, presents carvings which were ed extensively all over West and ntral Africa. It was a vital part the old African customs which ve been fading rapidly since the n of the century. With the dis- pearance of these ancient rituals, ny Western observers believe t the great period of African lpture has declined. However, ring its zenith, these ceremonial ects were created by three ndred and fifty art producing tribes, totalling over one hundred and sixty million people. They inhabited the vast lands including the French Sudan, Portuguese Guiana, French Guiana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Ivory Coast, Ghana (the old Gold Coast), Togo, Dahomey, Nigeria, the Cameroons, French Equatorial Africa (mainly Gabun and Middle Congo), the Belgian Congo and Angola.

Two Worlds of Africa

THESE Africans, like all other human beings, were forced to cope with two basic forces—the natural world around them, and the psychic world within. Both forces were instrumental in the creation of magnificent sculpture. The natural world, evidenced in the life-giving sun, rain, moon, wind, and storms, held the secret to the fertilizing powers which controlled the growth of the crops. To obtain rain, to control these powerful forces, ceremonies were invented, ceremonies which used carved statues as containers of malevolent spirits.

Thus, a wooden figure of a crocodile would act as a friendly intermediary between the water deities and the tribe. In the psychic world, the mystery of human life and death was clarified by the use of carvings to house the spirits of the dead. Sometimes it was the spirit of some deceased tribal king of divine origin. Most often, the carving contained the spirit of a

tribe-founding ancestor; for personal matters, a carving was made for the spirit of a tribesman's parents.

When we talk about "spirit," we really use a very simple concept which was far more complex to the African. The carved statue was not merely the residence of an ancestor's spirit. In African animism, each natural object had a spirit of its own. Thus, the carved statue contained an intermingling of the spirit of the tree-wood or ivory used in the carving with the spirit of the ancestor or animal whose image was depicted.

Magic Force

A statue or a mask acquired its power not only because a spirit was localized in it, but also because the material of which it was made had its own force. Very often special ceremonies were performed before a tree was cut down, to pacify the spirit of the tree and persuade it to heighten the power of the religio-magical object. The force of the carving could be further augmented by sacrificial blood, whose vital animal force was used to penetrate into the carving. Where a so-called "magical substance" was added to the statue, a priest acted as intermediary between the spirit world and the living person. On many small ivory carvings, several encircled-dot signs are carved to form a symbol (representing the male-sun symbol) that would a more power to the ivory piece.

What conceptual, or psych logical, factors form the belief th the object can become the abo of a powerful spirit, and that t African can depend upon it?

The concept that an inanim object can be the abode of a spi and that the individual may ha power to command this spirit, based upon the psychological p cess to project an idea or a w into a container. By contai we mean a physical object, whi becomes the focus of this p jected wish. Thus it is not t object, but the individual's p jected emotion which is associat with the object. We may also a Why is it that such a carved o ject is desired to become the c tainer of the force, and why such a wish originate in the psy of the individual?

Carved Father Symbols

LET us take the ancestor c as an example. A statue u in this cult is considered the abo of the spirit of the deceased fath The relationship of sons with th fathers starts from childhood, wh the infant depends upon the p tection of his father. But wh there is a feeling of love for protection received, there is als feeling of resentment or hat against the father as a prohibi figure, associated with pun

ent, who curbed many of the stinctual wishes of the infant.

This relationship often resulted r the son in a feeling of guilt, he experienced the emotion of volt, which was often repressed r fear of punishment. If the re- lt was not fully executed, the tent to revolt only (or often to minate the prohibitive figure of e father) resulted in a sense of ilt and remained in the psyche the individual. We must re- ember—to follow this psycho- gical investigation—that all past periences, as early as they may ve taken place, do leave an notional trace in the unconscious the individual.

Now, the man, an adult, faces e. He often wants to do some- ing, but before doing so, he may ant some protection to execute hat he wants to do. Such help is sociated with the father who ded him until adolescence. He erefore uses an item of sculpture confirm the belief that his ceased father's spirit lives in the tue. The first wish-projection thus to localize the spirit, so as to able to approach him and tablish a relationship with him. he second step is that he voices s wish to the spirit, now residing the statue. He is afraid that the her may disapprove of his wish; deed, he may have also a sense guilt connected with early ex- riences with the father.

He now performs a sacrificial act, in which he gives something valuable, i.e. (rice, chickens, a bull or cow) to the spirit so as to "bribe" his spirit. He was convinced that if he performs such a socially accepted sacrificial act, the father's spirit will not refuse the granting of his wish. The sacrificial act, may be construed also as an expiatory act for the sense of guilt. When he has performed what his religious belief indicates, he has achieved what he set out to do: he has gained the good-will, the benediction, of his father's spirit and may now proceed with his action.

Series of Wish Projection

We can see thus that in this sequence of events, a number of wish-projections take place, but the actual wish originated in the psyche of the individual and through the channel of faith in his own wish, the feeling that his wish will be granted happens again in his own psyche. It becomes a circle, starting and ending in the psyche of the individual. In the ancester cult there is a very strong personal relationship between the "spirit" and the petitioner.

Let us take now, as an example, an impersonal spirit, one of the natural forces—the earth, or properly speaking, the fertility of the earth. It is reported that among the Kissi of French Guinea, a phallic-shaped small steatite statue

is buried at the sowing of the rice, to fructify the earth, so as to bring forth an abundant harvest. Among the Bambara of the French Sudan, carved antelopes are fastened to a head-gear of the dancers, who imitate the jumps of the antelope to express the hope that the grain will grow as high as they leap in their dances.

Whether the various ceremonies are connected with the father's spirit or with the forces of nature, there is one basic motivating reason and one important purpose. The cause lies in the psyche of the individual, which, if filled with insecurity, aims at reassurance, projection and removal of fear.

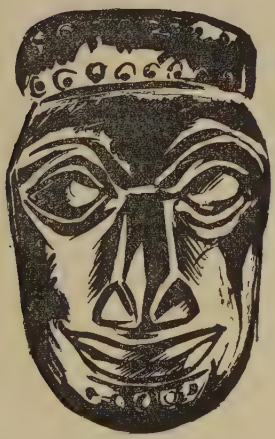
The purpose is to achieve this "peace of mind" by controlling destiny and to change the chance element to certainty in favor of the individual. A "soul to soul" circle is completed. Through fulfilling a prescribed duty, the individual removes his sense of guilt and, having faith in the effectiveness of his action, in an auto-suggestive manner, he is able to remove his fear of the unforseen.

If we study each African reli ious and magical ritual, we o serve that it serves to satisfy deeply rooted psychological ne of the individual. This knowled of the mechanism of the psyc was acquired through centuries observation, and the correspondi ceremonies became the tradition each tribe. The African choses satisfy the basic psychological nee whatever the cause might ha been. He has been able to do because he was not left alone, b as a conservative member of homogenous, well-integrated ciety, had a communal, spiritu unity shared by all its membe By abandoning individuality a following the tradition of his o group, he was able to achieve high measure of security.

As much as the projection o wish, the faith in the power of t protective spirits might be co sidered in our society as "super tion"; but it does work for t African by helping him to al anxiety and fear, insecurity a isolation.

Elenore Smith Bowen

RETURN TO LAUGHTER



Excerpts from the vivid, dramatic book by an American anthropologist who was for many months the intimate of a primitive bush tribe of Africa, whose rites she witnessed.

ELENORE SMITH BOWEN, anthropologist and author, wrote Return t Laughter *as a fictionalized account of her twenty-six months in an Africa village. She says of her book in an introductory author's note:*

"The tribe I have described here does exist. This book is the story of the wo I did field work among them. The ethnographic background given here is accurat but it is neither complete nor technical. When I write as a social anthropologi and within the canons of that discipline, I write under another name. Here I ha written simply as a human being. . . . "

The excerpts from Return to Laughter *presented on the following pages a the dramatic high points of the book. They tell of the death in childbirth of a woma of the tribe, Amara, whom Mrs. Bowen had come to love; and of Amara's uncl Yabo, accused of killing her by witchcraft.*

(Excerpted, by permission of the publishers, from *Return to Laughter*, by Elenore Smith Bowe Copyright, 1954, by Harper & Brothers, New York.)

AMARA was the only truly gentle person I met out here in the West African bush country; indeed, she had a consideration and sympathy for others rare in this world. She was three months with child, and d been afflicted by that terrible disease which swells the breasts until, though filled by some heavy substance, they stretch and drag below e waist. Everyone foresaw a difficult birth. Therefore, her father had ranged that she should be brought to her uncle Yabo's homestead here proper magical and medical precautions could be taken.

Yabo, being one of the senior men of the community, possessed a eat deal of legitimate magic. And while he was respected, he was also iversally disliked, because of his brusque, contempuous manner. Yabo en called the most respected elders fools; and what was worse, he had uncomfortable way of proving it. Therefore, when he sent a peremp-y message to me that Amara had been in labor all night and that I s to come at once with medicine, I was torn between an angry re-ion to his orders and a sympathetic desire to help Amara.

Actually, there was no reason for me to hurry. I knew nothing of mid-fery, and could do very little to help Amara. Nevertheless, I set off wn the path as quickly as I could, and soon overtook Udama, the wife chief Kako, with another woman I did not know. "Yabo's senior wife s summoned all the midwives. This case is too much for her," she said.

At Yabo's instructions, his niece Amara had been carried out of the t and placed under a tree in the yard. The breeze, he said, would resh her; here, too, there would be space for all the midwives, and ey would be able to see the better. Already about a dozen women had thered around her. I recognized the senior women of Yabo's homestead d a middle-aged woman who was Amara's co-wife. She had appeared, th their husband, as soon as word had reached them.

I looked at the assembled midwives. Yabo's senior wife had indeed at far and wide. One old crone, bent almost double and shaking with e, lived four miles away. "You have come far, my mother," I con-atulated her, for I had occasionally seen her on the path, tottering, tching at her stick, always balancing on her head a small calabash at quivered and slid as the old woman trembled, and yet miraculously ver fell off.

Udama's husky companion pushed her way into the midst of the clus-ed experts. Amara was lying back in a sloping wooden chair, head ling, eyes shut. Her co-wife supported her. The midwives argued, idly and volubly, asking Yabo's senior wife for details, interrupting r replies and unanimous only in their disapproval of her treatment.

Yabo, with a sheaf of herbs in his hand, appeared at my elbow. Shou ing down the midwives, he demanded my medicine—for I had bee besieged by calls for aspirin and bandages since my arrival. "I hav none," I spoke loudly and to them all. "In our country also childbir is the affair of old experienced women, or of doctors." Only Amara kin seemed disappointed. The old women looked rather relieved th they were to remain in charge. They resumed their consultations.

Meanwhile Yabo crushed the herbs into a pot, poured water ov them and told one of his wives to put it on the fire to boil. As I jotte down the names of the ingredients, he added that this was medici associated with difficult childbirth; there was little use in performi the ceremony without positive diagnosis from the diviner, but there cou be no harm in administering it and it might help.

The midwives had reached an agreement: not an agreement on a one course of treatment, but that each of them was to apply her ow remedies. One of them had begun to massage Amara with cruelly st fingers whose touch made Amara whimper. Several others had scatter into the bush to gather roots, leaves and grasses from which they wou prepare those medicines they had found most efficacious. Soon the hom stead was full of bustle. The old women commandeered pots, mortars a pestles, and the palettelike slabs of smooth, dark stone on which o grinds snuff and medicine.

I wandered about from one to the other. I tried to put my wh attention on herbal recipes. It distressed me to watch Amara. One woma prepared an oleaginous mess that was to be smeared on Amara's abd men; it would gradually soak in and strengthen her muscles. Anoth produced an oily application to grease and make easy the "path of t child." Most of them were preparing medicine for Amara to drink: so were to induce violent labor pains; others would give the mother streng for her ordeal. The shaky old crone was boiling three kinds of bark a lots of pepper into a thick reddish mess with a nauseating odor; this w the most important of their medicines, for it was associated with the ou magic controlled by women and would assist Amara far more than th other, purely secular doses.

As they finished their medicines, each midwife poured her brew do Amara's throat. After about the fourth gourdful, Amara complain that she felt sick. Her protest produced only yet another draught whi would, they assured her, settle her stomach. Whenever their unfortuna victim closed her lips and would not swallow, they began to sho "Drink, my child. It is medicine. Drink." They gave her no peace un all the potions were finished.

Udama drew me from Amara's side. "It will take time for the medicine walk through her body and do its work. Come, Red-woman," she led me by the name she had given me and drew me into Yabo's ception hut. The other midwives followed, leaving Amara under the re of her co-wife. Inside were Yabo, with Amara's husband, her father m, all the men of the homestead, and Yabo's younger full brother labo who had built a separate homestead years ago after a bitter arrel with Yabo. They were in earnest consultation. It was time to it a diviner. Lam and Amara's husband wished to set off at once. The ers advised waiting until the midwives thought it necessary.

Soon there was a call from Amara's co-wife: "The medicine has gun its work." Again the midwives gathered around Amara, encouraging her, massaging, pouring still more messes down her throat, hopeful d confident. The hours passed. Amara, exhausted, could not respond their shouts. She seemed to withdraw from her body, and her body m its task, until there was only an inert mass slipping from our hold.

Udama gravely walked to the reception hut. Standing erect outside, e called to Yabo, "The matter is too great for us. It has become your air."

Lam and Amara's husband at once came out. Without a word, they ached for the spears they had leaned against the thatch of the reception t. Without a word, they set off for the diviner.

Udama turned to me. Soberly she said, "Go eat your food, Redwoman. en return. Nothing will happen while you are gone, for there is nothing can do. There is magic in this, perhaps witchcraft. The world was so eated that, as the field brings forth its fruit, so does a woman bear her ildren. Only evil willed by man can prevent it. Unless the elders seek t this evil and remove it, no medicine can help her."

I stood over Amara. She tried to smile at me. She was very ill. I was nvinced these women could not help her. She would die. She was my end, but my epitaph for her would be impersonal observations scribbled my notebook, her memory preserved in an anthropologist's file: "Death childbirth) / Cause: witchcraft / Case of Amara." A lecture from the st reproached me. "The anthropologist cannot, like the chemist or ologist, arrange controlled experiments. Like the astronomer, he can ly observe. But unlike the astronomer, his mere presence produces anges in the data he is trying to observe. He himself is a disturbing luence which he must endeavor to keep to the minimum. His claim science must therefore rest on a meticulous accuracy of observation d on a cool, objective approach to his data."

A cool, objective approach to Amara's death?

One can, perhaps, be cool when dealing with questionnaires or wh interviewing strangers. But what is one to do when one can collect on data only by forming personal friendships? It is hard enough to think of friend as a case history. Was I to stand aloof, observing the course events? There could be no professional hesitation. I might otherwi never see the ceremonies connected with death in childbirth.

I marched over to Yabo. "Do you wish Amara to live?"

Yabo grunted his willingness to hear me out.

"There are doctors who can save both her life and the life of h child. They have stronger medicines than yours to bring forth the chil If those fail, they know how to reach up into the womb. They ev know how to cut open the living body, bring forth the child and th heal the mother. I will send a messenger on a bicycle to the hospit and another for a truck. I will pay carriers to carry Amara up to t road and on it, until the truck meets them. I will write a paper to t hospital, asking them to give her the best medicine and telling them th I will pay. I have always spoken truth to you, Yabo, and I speak tru now. Give my friend Amara to me, that she and her child may live."

YABO spoke more kindly than I had ever heard him speak, but wi determination. "You are Amara's friend and your heart wish her well. I am grateful. I will even believe what you say of your do tors. But can your doctors remove the magic? Can your people de with our witches? These things *I* can do, but *they* can not. Unless the things are done, my brother's child will die. Amara stays here."

I argued with him, passionately. The ceremonies could be perform for Amara, even in her absence, on a cloth she often wore. The mag would be less powerful, but surely it would suffice to ward off evil un her return, especially if she could have our medicine meanwhile. would cost them nothing in effort or money.

Yabo grew no less firm, but far less patient. Nothing I could say mov him. I was only making a nuisance of myself. When I would not sto Yabo simply ceased to listen and forced me to recognize his refusal starting a loud conversation with his brother Yilabo.

Defeated, I sat on by Amara all that day, forced to watch her in pa and steadily growing weaker. I heard the diviner's report, saw the m sengers dispatched to bring back experts in that magic which Ya himself could not perform. I watched Yabo sacrifice chickens, ma ritual motions and anoint Amara with sacrificial blood as he mumbl the magical invocations. Yabo was doing his best. But it could not he

d they would not allow me to help. In silence and in bitterness, at htfall, I left.

returned the next day at sunrise. The midwives had not returned, Yilabo's wives had come and all the women of Yabo's homestead in the reception hut, waiting. They sat around Amara, who lay re on a plank bed. She was alive, little more. Her co-wife supported head in her lap. Their husband had gone to summon his age set kind of mutual aid society, formed of men born within three years of another) to defend him if he were accused of killing his wife, and to port him when he accused others. For the diviner had discovered t four men had reason to bewitch Amara: her father Lam, her two cles Yabo and Yilabo, and her husband. With this report before m, the elders must themselves identify the witch and settle the dises and grudges which had driven the witch to this action.

During the early morning, the ritual specialists Yabo had summoned ived, one after the other. Jovial, some of them, like hearty country ctors; they made their jokes and radiated confidence as they slit the oats of chickens and daubed mud, blood and feathers on the ritual mbols and on Amara's navel. Most of them were dignified old men, d in ragged togas, who probed seriously and thoroughly into the dings of the diviner and muttered their incantations gravely. All of m, the ritual finished, prescribed the herbal remedies associated with ceremonies they had performed and supervised the mixture.

Each time her co-wife raised Amara's head. Each time Yabo held the tion to her lips. Each time they called to Amara, as to someone far ay, until she opened her eyes and weakly swallowed the medicine. ch time they had to call louder and longer to make her hear. And ch of the elders, his task finished, took the spear he had leaned against entrance and left the homestead. I marveled, for usually elders ther where there is serious illness and enjoy nothing more than magical nsultations.

Yabo's eldest son entered the reception hut. "They refuse."

"They can't refuse!" Yilabo was a thin, excitable man, as highly ung as his brother Yabo, but without Yabo's stamina or intelligence.

"Oh, my father," Yabo's son began formally, to dissociate himself m any responsibility for the message he brought, "the elders all say u have refused their advice in the past. Therefore they will not come advise and assist you now." He dodged out quickly, away from Yabo's demnation of the elders as timid evil-wishing fools, weak-kneed folvers of that smiling villain Kako, chief of the tribe. Yabo cursed his

son as a bungling, easily intimidated idiot while Yilabo's highpitch voice scolded Yabo for the contempt which had alienated the elde The women stirred uneasily; who now would protect Amara from h closest relatives, from those who should protect her life but had t power to cause her death? They muttered secretly among themselves.

Yabo was the first to pull himself together. He rose, dominating t reception hut, his feet red with camwood in the sunlight that slant through the door, his face and body gloomy in the dim light with "There are four of us who might have willed this thing. When Amar husband returns, we shall all be here. Then we ourselves shall discuss I, Yabo, forbid Amara's death. I am stronger than all of you, and forbid it. The elders' refusal is therefore of no importance. Neverthele he added, "they shall repent their insult to me."

Perhaps none of us looked convinced. Yabo, a shrewd man thou one not usually concerned with the comfort of his guests, sent his wom off to prepare food. He ordered Lam to prepare some medicine wh he Yabo had held in reserve. Then he engaged Yilabo in an enumerati of the magic they possessed, to see if any had been left unperformed.

THUS it was that when Amara's husband arrived with his age mat a feast was ready for them. They may have come to accuse. Th found themselves eating greedily. While they gorged themselves porridge dipped in a chicken and sesame sauce, Yabo skillfully t them of the iniquitous behavior of the elders who had refused to co of his own unceasing surveillance and care, of the medicine Lam wou soon have ready for his daughter, of the rite Yilabo would then perfor Amara, he said, was merely sleeping; let her gather strength; there w nothing to worry about.

When the women removed the empty pots and calabashes, Ya divided some kola nuts and passed pipes among the young men. Reple they sat back quite contentedly to see what would be done. Only Amar husband was still tense and suspicious. Yabo radiated good will a confidence as he inspected Lam's medicine.

But Amara would not respond to her father's voice when he cal her to wake and drink medicine. "She is not sleeping, yet my child d not hear." There was dread in his voice.

"Don't whisper then," Yabo snorted. He shoved Lam aside, sh Amara and slapped her face as he roared in her ear, "Amara, Ama drink!" He roused her. As they lifted her head, Yabo held the calab to her lips and spoke almost coaxingly as he poured the liquid into mouth, little by little.

Yabo's senior wife stood over them, watching Amara narrowly. "She y still live," the old woman snapped, "if you men will only discuss tters now and quickly. If you delay, she will not have the strength bear her child."

The confidence so carefully established by Yabo had already vanished. 'It is you"—Amara's husband pointed at Yabo in accusation—"it you who are my wife's guardian. There is rancor in your heart beuse you covet more bridewealth than we agreed upon. The court uld not take my wife from me; therefore in anger and jealousy you ve bewitched her so that seeing her sick to death I would pay you re."

During his jumbled, vehement indictment his age mates cried out ir backing: "Hear, hear." "That's right." "He is speaking truth." d when he finished, one of them jumped up to shout, "Leave our e mate's wife alone. We will not allow it."

Yabo admitted that he wanted more money, but he denied that he s bewitching Amara. "You," he accused her husband, "you are ling the child in her womb, for you wish to make her ill and thus ake me drop my claim." His counteraccusation was brilliant. There s only one way for Amara's husband to clear himself of all suspicion: he admitted that he owed yet more money for Amara's bridewealth, en he also proved that he had not yet purchased the power to bewitch e child she carried. Either way, Yabo won.

Accusation and counteraccusation. The men shouted, threatened, nied and attacked. Whenever they paused, the women urged, "Agree, ree that our daughter may live!" "Agree, that your wife and mine ay live."

Amara might yet be saved, if only they would settle all the grudges tween them, all their possible motives for bewitching her. Witchcraft mes from the heart, sometimes involuntarily; it can cease only when e witch's heart is freed of all hate and rancor. Has the witch a just otive? Remove it, quickly. A witch can, indeed, be forced to desist. ie use of physical force against a witch is dangerous, but possible. A ong man like Ihugh threatened it on a previous occasion, and conced the witches that he would use it, irrespective of the consequences. t no one here would dare. Only the elders, sitting together, with unanius consent, can wield enough witchcraft to fight fire with fire successly. But the elders had refused to come.

Only the women were wholly free from suspicion. They were singlended in their determination that Amara must be saved. Even if the

witch's cause were just, let him abandon it that Amara might live. B
although any one of the suspects—father, husband, uncles—would glad
have sacrificed his interests for her life, each knew that sacrifice wou
be in vain, for each one of them knew he was innocent of wishing h
death.

Yabo knew he was not killing Amara. Why, then, should he for
his claim to more bridewealth for her? It might be a motive, but
knew he was not the guilty one. As long as he persisted, however, t
others, who also knew themselves innocent, suspected him, indignan
denied his counteraccusations, and just as firmly refused to cede a
ground.

The women pleaded, forcing the men to look at Amara's motionl
figure. Time after time, looking at her, one of them would sudden
yield. Yabo lowered his first price. Amara's husband paid it then a
there. Together they performed the brief ritual of reconciliation, drinki
water and spraying it from their mouths. Lam admitted that he h
grudged Yabo's taking his daughter as marriage ward at a time wh
he was wifeless and without means of getting another wife. Yabo ced
one of his marriage wards to Lam. Yilabo and Yabo again went in
the old quarrel that had caused them to live apart. Again their ang
flared. Again the women intervened. Again those who loved her look
at Amara. Again each sacrificed his own interests that she might li
And yet again they made some compromise and were ritually reconcil

Still Amara was no better. "You are speaking with double tongue
the women accused. "There is something else. Settle it, and dispel yo
hate, or Amara will die."

They were at a standstill. There were no evident motives. If th
actually were no other cause, then Amara was being killed to sati
that dreadful lust which takes possession of some witches: the desire
kill and eat the victim's body.

THE ability to bewitch is dangerous, but it is a common human f
ulty, and, like any other weapon, it can be used for many purpos
A good man uses witchcraft only as a last resort, and then not to k
But there are witches who enjoy being feared, who delight in killi
and who hunger for human flesh. Such men are feared and hated. Th
walk alone.

Everyone turned to stare at Yabo. Here was the man. It was writ
in their eyes.

Yabo saw it. He turned on his full brother Yilabo with quick reproa
"How can our niece recover when you delay the ceremony?"

We had all forgotten the ceremony, and, having forgotten, felt guilty, ashed and relieved all at once. While Yilabo got ready the herbs and gical apparatus, Yabo, with apparent irrelevance, began a rambling cussion of family history, recounting the wives and children, sisters and rriage wards of two generations past. Once again he had broken the unting tension; thinking this the only purpose behind his leisurely course, I gave all my attention to Yilabo's ritual performance.

Yilabo, however, was listening to Yabo. Even while he made the magical stures, he would interrupt with his own comments and opinions. By time he had finished and was squeezing the juice of some plants into a abash of water, he was arguing stubbornly with Yabo. "No, you are staken. She was not his ward, but his uncle's."

Amara's husband and his age mates were beginning to follow their mments with interest. Lam offered his version, but was promptly elched by both brothers. "You, you are just a youngster."

"Perhaps," retorted Lam, "but Amara is my daughter."

Yilabo, always excitable, made angry, nervous gestures. The wet herbs re still in his hand; Amara and I were sprayed with bitter water. "Do u not see what Yabo is doing? He wishes you to believe what he says so u will not think he has any cause for envying me that wife I inherited m our father. He has always been jealous of me for that. That is why is bewitching your daughter."

There was a rising mutter from the age set. "Yes, it is Amara's relatives o are bewitching her." "It is jealousy over women."

Amara's husband sprang to his feet. He pointed at Yabo and shouted, ask you, I demand of you, what bitterness is in your heart?"

Yabo waited for silence. Then he leaned back in his chair and asked ud, "Why should I bewitch my own ward Amara out of hate for abo? What is she to him? Nothing." He pointed his pipe stem at abo. "It is you who are jealous of me because I am the eldest and d the largest part of the inheritance. It is you who are bewitching ara."

Yilabo dropped the calabash. His body trembled and his face was wn with rage. "It is you, you!" Again he accused Yabo. Again Yabo sted every accusation to his own advantage.

It had to be one of those two. Amara's husband had cleared himself. m was too weak a character to be seriously suspected. Yabo or Yilabo, ich? We were utterly absorbed in the duel between those two. Only ara lay unconscious of the fight for her life.

Yabo kept a deadly composure; every word struck home. Yilab lashed out wildly, without plan. He was no match for Yabo. Yabo di not stir from his chair. He was shouting, overriding Yilabo's defens invulnerable to his attacks—yet his very superiority was a proof that h possessed the greater power of witchcraft.

Yilabo had been pushed past coherent argument. He screamed ran dom accusations at Yabo, attributing every misfortune that had eve befallen him to Yabo's malice. Constantly he repeated. "It is you, yo who are killing Amara. You! *You!*" Yilabo stood over Yabo, his whol being shaken by his desperate passion.

I too had begun to tremble. Here it was no comfort that witches wer only people. Therein lay the tragedy. These men were torn with anguish striving to save the life of one they loved. Amara could yet live, if the could only force a confession from the witch. Each knew himself innocen Each therefore knew the other guilty. I knew them both innocent. watched while each strove to break the other, to force his confession, t save Amara. I knew they could not. Their battle was the more terribl to me because it was in vain and fought against shadows.

They were frantic now; if the witch did not desist soon, now, it woul be too late.

Again Yabo accused, with deadly effect. Ashen, trembling, Yilab mouthed words we could not hear. We cried out. Yilabo's dagger flashe from its sheath as he sprang on his brother below him, defenseless in h chair.

Somehow Yilabo's wife had him by the wrist. Yabo slid away fro danger. Yilabo's knees gave under him as he stared at the dagger. Slowl his hand opened. He watched it, as though it were not his hand, not h doing, not his wish. He looked on while his wife took the weapon fro him.

"Your own brother." A chilly whisper. "Your own brother, wh nursed you when you were a child. You would have killed your ow brother."

There was no motion in the reception hut, no sound but Yilabo harsh breathing. The moment of realization is infinite.

Amara's husband rose, slowly. Deliberately he loosened his toga fro his shoulders. Deliberately he twisted the cloth and coiled it about h waist in sign of war, or mourning. We stared without comprehensio Then, suddenly afraid, we looked at Amara. The woman by her answere us, "She still lives."

"She will die," and her husband's voice spoke more of war than mourning. "One of you two is killing her. Have we not witnessed tha

brother would kill brother? What evil, then, is beyond you? She is my wife. I do not consent. Confess! Or my age mates and I will force you both to the ordeal."

"So be it." Yilabo smiled. "My chicken will drink poison, but it will live to prove my innocence. Then if Yabo will not cease, you may beat him and rub pepper in his eyes."

"So be it." With a terrible glance at his brother, Yabo too assumed the dress of war and mourning.

But they were afraid. They wanted to delay, to get witnesses, elders. They stood in the yard arguing, refusing to start.

Amara's husband turned to his age mates in passionate appeal. "They are killing my wife! Make them go!" The young men closed on the two elders.

Yabo raised his spear. "You dare?" he roared. "You dare!"

I screamed as they rushed upon him, then sobbed as I saw the tumultuous crowd jostle and drag the two old men out of the homestead and down the path toward the ordeal master.

My knees were shaking. I was afraid to go with them. I forced myself out on the path to follow them. Amara's husband was coming back. He saw me. "Let my age mates take care of it. You come back with me and keep watch by my wife. She will die. Help me guard her body. He will kill her. I cannot prevent it. But he will have killed her in vain. He shall not eat her body."

It was dark inside the reception hut, and very quiet. The women still kept watch over Amara. Her co-wife still sat with her.

The man stood looking down upon his dying wife. A man must never call his wife by her name. He may never touch her in public. This man knelt beside his wife. "Child of Lam."

She did not stir.

Tentatively, he laid his hand on her forehead. "Amara, Amara." Perhaps he thought she heard, for he added bravely, "Nothing at all will happen to you, Amara, my wife." He clasped her hand in his.

We sat on, waiting in silence for Amara to die.

THE SUN sank lower, thrusting yellow fingers of light through the dilapidated thatch of Yabo's reception hut. Amara still lived, her hand held in her husband's. Still the others had not returned. I had sent for cigarettes, sandwiches, coffee and a bush lamp, for Amara's husband had asked me to watch the night through. Outside, the shadows turned purple, lengthening,, spreading, slowly conquering the earth as their domain. We watched night fall.

Once we heard the sound of shouting men and lifted our heads listen, but as they passed by on the main path we heard them disputin goats and chickens and knew they were only strangers, coming bac from market. It grew dark. At the doors a faint gray. The embers then selves were gray with ash. Only my hands and the white cloth they ha laid over the dying woman showed pale in the dark.

The gleam of fires flickered from the surrounding huts. The man andl sat on alone, absorbed in the darkness into which Amara was slippin

Later, some women joined us, sitting quietly in the shadows. An ow hooted in the distance, a mournful sound that drew us closer to eac other and to the fire. A soft pad of bare feet outside; the faint rustle of spear leaned against the thatch. Amara's husband called out sharpl "Who is it?"

"It's I." One of his age mates, tired and muddy, crawled in the doo way. "The oracle master was not at home. We have sent for him, bu we cannot know until morning. I have come to tell you. The rest wi wait there for him." He turned to Yabo's senior wife. "Give me a pip I have walked far and am weary."

The old woman broke a twist of tobacco into her curved, woode pipe. She lit it with a coal from the fire, then handed it to the youn man. I too began to smoke and he seemed to notice my presence fo the first time. The old woman explained. "Redwoman does not agre to Amara's death. Therefore she is watching with us."

He nodded. "I also think so," he said obscurely, "for the elders woul not come by day. Listen!" Again we heard the owls, still distant. He turne to me. "It is well that you are here, Redwoman. The witches are abroa tonight."

"What do you mean?" My voice was just steady.

"Can you not hear the witch owls calling? They smell death and a gathering for the feast of ghouls."

"They have smelled death indeed. She is struggling with death."

Amara's breathing had changed. Her fingers clutched the cloth. He body, gross with the promise of life, twisted once sharply, convulsively and was still.

Yabo's senior wife held her pipe from her mouth. "She dies."

Amara's husband still clasped her hand. "Bring me a feather!" h snarled at the old woman. Then to me, "Is she dead? She cannot b dead."

I could find no pulse. The feather below her nostrils did not stir. Sti

grouped about her in a strangely indecisive silence, as though life ght yet return. We were still as though enchanted.

Then, quite close, we heard the call of an owl.

Amara's husband tore out of the hut, grazing his shoulder on the v doorway. We heard him shout, "What have I ever done to you t you rob me of my wife and child? I have never eaten human flesh. u have killed . . . "

But even as he shouted, the women broke into a terrible wailing, a nshee lament torn from soul and body. Standing, hands clasped be- d the head, body arched and shaking with the cry that began in a h scream and sobbed itself slowly down the scale into silence. The ul firelight touched Amara's body with deceitful warmth and lent r face expression even as it turned the living into strange, weeping adows.

Yabo's senior wife stripped Amara's body, tearing the cloth she had rn about her loins. She motioned the young man to leave. "Take ur age mate into my hut," she ordered. "He should not be alone to- ght." She knelt by Amara, lifted her head and tied the torn cloth about r face, masking it completely. That mask of death seemed to banish mara from among us. The wild sobbing ceased. We were no longer th Amara, but with a corpse that must be readied for its burial.

The women scattered to their tasks. Only one of them still stood by e fire, singing Amara's dirge: a song told in a minor key and made range by a scale not our own; a string of mournful phrases knotted tween racking sobs.

The women washed the body and smeared it heavily with camwood. their request, I lit my bush lamp. In its steadier light, the scene took a sobriety and calm that matched the new mood of the women. There as sorrow in their faces, but the anxious fear that had marked their atures for the past hours had vanished. Somehow we had returned to a ner world. I helped them lift the body—it was very heavy—so we ight wrap it in the white cloth that had covered Amara during her last urs of life.

This task done, they called her husband. "Watch, while we go wash ath from us," they told him. "Come," they said to me, "take your mp, and we will go wash in the stream."

Outside the night was cool and clear. Familiar stars were low on e horizon. I felt that I too wished to wash death from me. Like the her women, I piled my clothes on a boulder by the stream. Momentarily felt shamelessly naked among their decorously dark bodies. The shock cold water drove death and nakedness from my mind and from theirs.

As the sun began to rise, the dirge died away, and the women turn to their morning tasks. Amara's husband and I set off down the pa together: he to tell Yabo of Amara's death, I to inform Kako, the ch of the tribe.

Kako knew. In the still night he had heard the wailing. "We w have to meet for the funeral," he told me, "as soon as Yabo retur Meanwhile, go rest. I will call you when it is time."

When, in the late morning, we met at Yabo's, I was curiously remind of the first funeral to which Yabo himself had taken me. Again there wa homestead full of people clustered under the trees. There was one stran difference. There was no knot of mourners, sitting silent and numb, ap from the rest. Amara's husband sat surrounded by his age mates. La too, sat among his age group, holding Amara's son on his knees.

Apart from the others and from the elders, sat Yilabo and Yal behind them were ranked all the male descendants of their fathe father. There was an empty chair among them. Kako pointed to it. "Y watched by the body, Redwoman, therefore today you must sit amo them." He smiled briefly, "Don't worry. We know you do not kn We shall not ask you."

Yabo clasped my hands as I sat down beside him. "You know I did kill her."

"Yes," I said. "I know."

"We heard of her death while the ordeal master was mixing the pois Then he refused to give the ordeal; he would not take judgment out of t hands of the elders. Now they will all think I did it, for they know m heart is strong."

There was a touch of pride in his voice that suddenly sickened m I excused myself to go greet the women in the reception hut. Th dirges gave the day its unity. The formless, pulsing wailing had stopp Two women were singing well-known laments; through their voic sometimes in organum, sometimes in perfect counterpoint, Amar cousin wove her smooth contralto in broken praise of the dead. N and again one of the women would utter that slow, descending scale sobs, a leitmotif in tone and rhythm.

The women of Yabo's homestead sat closely about Amara's bo with leafy branches in their hands to wave away the flies. The hut w packed. All the senior women of the neighborhood, all the young wom who had known and liked Amara were crouched close together, coveri the floor and even out under the eaves. In their midst, the fire burn hot and bright. The air was stale with their crowded numbers and th

in it a sickly odor, a sweet corruption, the perfume of death. I forced self to mutter correct condolence before I retreated into the fresh air side. There, once more by Yabo's side, I listened again to the singing marveled that man has been able to lend death such dignity.

Yabo rose. Slowly, without evident emotion, he told us of Amara's th and manner of dying. I hardly listened. It was wearisome to re- itulate hours that had been so long in the living. I watched Lam dle his grandson on his knee. He too seemed to be exhausted past rest. At one point in Yabo's recital, he made a flat denial, but then relapsed into indifference. His age mates were there to fight for him. was they who leaped up to shout and defend when Yabo or the elders acked Lam.

Once again, as at my first funeral, I saw the debate grow hot, watched ple shake their spears at each other, saw the elders divided in their nion. This time too, though they sat apart and aloof from each other, w the mourners sit tired, too weary to argue themselves. They, and I, e anesthetized by fatigue.

Only Yabo stood alone. He alone was unable to leave his case in re capable hands. He had boasted that he was stronger than them all, now he had to pay for his boast. His closest kinsmen had banded ind him, as they were in duty bound, but there was no one of them had Yabo's skill and intelligence in defense and attack. Moreover, was to Yilabo that they gave their genuine support.

heard again what I had heard while Amara lay dying: the same uments, the same motives, the same accusations. There was more se. There were more people. But to me the shouting was mechanical. e urgency that had driven them while Amara might yet be saved had e. Only the constant mournful singing that flooded through the den silences reminded us that Amara was still our concern.

Someone had killed Amara. The guilt must be fixed. Here too was nething mechanical and the debate seemed unreal. Perhaps those us who had been most closely concerned were too tired to care. I n't care any more. Since Amara's death I had fallen into apathy. it was more than that. There could be no tension today: Amara s past help, and judgment was a foregone conclusion. It would be bo. His guilt had been in their eyes yesterday. Who else among them s so ruthless? Who else so selfish? Who else had so often braved the nion of the elders and dared to walk alone?

Yesterday Yabo had defended himself with powerful conviction. He nted to prove his innocence because he wanted to find the guilty one.

Today, this motive gone, he was slowly entrapped in his own charac and by his own reputation. He had always thought most of the eld fools; they were showing themselves fools again today. His contempt them began to show, and it angered them. That same contempt of th who were there to judge him, of those who were believed to comma the magical powers of the community, frightened the younger men. A Yabo's fatal joy in commanding, winning, making himself feared, him to play on their every sign of belief in his evil powers.

As the hours wore on, Yabo's protestations of innocence became form set phrases. His repetition of the indictments leveled against him— a witch?" "I wish her death?"—lost their first shuddering denial, came empty, then gradually were tinged with an evil, mocking pr that attested their truth. Before my eyes I saw their proof of witchcr Yabo had been accused, falsely accused, because he was feared. N he embraced that accusation that he might be still more feared. A witc reputation grows like a philanderer's: every new conquest is attribu to the same man; and his denials are called discretion.

Yabo would not have killed Amara, but Yabo was not unwilling be credited with her death. He wanted to be thought guilty. At the er he stood alone and upright, contemptuous of the accusers snarling ab him, laughing at their horror of the crime, until they gave way bef him in fear and loathing. In the end he was confronted only by brother Yilabo, and I, too, believed when Yilabo cried out, "You deny With your tongue you deny it. But in your heart you know who has d it."

"Enough." Kako's voice put an end to accusation, even as its t fixed the guilt. "Bury her, and give her child to its father, for it w not he who killed her."

Lam, holding his grandson close, carried the child over to Kako. T boy cried a little, when his grandfather left him in strange hands, h he was soon comforted when Kako gave him over to his own father.

From the outskirts of the homestead came the crunch of hoes biti into the ground. Yabo's sons were digging a grave. The singing gr louder. The elders sat immobile and withdrawn. Some of the wom came out of the reception hut and began to move about in their o huts. It seemed hardly the right atmosphere for a funeral feast, ye could not imagine what else they might be doing. No one paid any tention.

Yabo's sons came back into the homestead. They were covered w dirt. As they approached the reception hut to bring out the body,

nging ceased abruptly. Once again our ears were pierced by high-tched wails, a chaos of sound, offensive and animal after the music the dirges. Wailing, screaming, the women withdrew into their huts hind closed doors. No woman, no man whose wife is with child may ok into a grave lest birth and death be confounded.

The men all rose to follow the body to the grave. Yabo drew me along, d Kako nodded approval. There are many sights forbidden to women t only to protect the women from powers they are not strong enough withstand. As a European, I was considered probably immune to any of these influences; my continued survival confirmed their opinion. nly some of the women interpreted my hardihood as a sign of more cult powers; they thought I might possibly be a witch. But today even e men looked curiously at me as I stood by the side of the open grave d watched them lower Amara's body into it. They covered her with anches, so the soil might not touch her. Soon only a raw mound of d earth marked her grave. There had been no ritual, no ceremony of y kind. Just a group of men who watched silently and spoke only to ve practical instructions. Everything that had been in contact with the rpse must be destroyed or washed. The women might come out; ey too must bathe, and the gravediggers.

Still the elders lingered at Yabo's. Then, when the women had re-rned from the stream, I saw the reason for their former activity. They ere leaving. The young men with their wives and possessions were aving, some to live with Yilabo, some to go to other relatives. Lam t with his age mates. Amara's husband went off with his son and his latives. Yabo sat, intent, but making no sign, as one after the other his wives and children walked away and out of his homestead, without ying a word. The elders sat on, witnessing their departure and receiving e only farewells they spoke.

Yabo's senior wife came out, empty-handed save for her pipe. She fered it to Kako: it was the gesture of a hostess. She alone was not raid to remain with Yabo. Yabo, sitting alone beside me, drew in his eath as Kako accepted the pipe, drew a few puffs, then rose to leave. s I got up to go with him, Yabo suddenly asked, "Will you come again see me?"

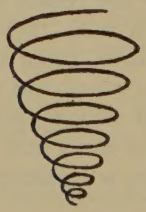
He looked very old, left there alone in that empty homestead. I nodded, d repeated my promise to the old woman as I passed her.

By the time I got home, the boys all knew. "The evil at heart are left ne, sitting in a silent homestead. Yabo is a witch. He could not refute And it is thus that witches are punished."

However, the ostracism could not be made complete. They coul continue to ostracize Yabo only by slighting their own and pressin business. People here lived so closely together that almost every mov ment of one irritated another. Yet they were so dependent on each oth that continuing a feud or indulging a spite was a luxury taxed wit personal disadvantage.

Yabo and Poorgbilin had the same great-grandfather. When som weeks later a family matter arose, and the elders gathered at Poorgbilin homestead, the day's business could not be settled unless all the ma descendents of that ancestor were present.

Yabo was called to the meeting and came. At first he was treate to cold civility. However, the polite manner is incompatible with the debating technique. One cannot shout and brandish a spear with reserv Inevitably, as soon as people began to find their interests threatene they began to stamp and scream. Yabo was out in the middle, yellin with the best of them. It was an angry scene, but a very normal on Yabo, I felt, was back in, at least for the present.



- "A Seance Among the Azande," Pages 11-26, appeared original in *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande*, by E. E. Evan Pritchard (Oxford University Press, 1937).
- "Charms and Magic," Pages 49-53 appeared originally in *W African Religion*, by Geoffrey Parrinder (The Epworth Press, Londo 1949). Both excerpts are reproduced by permission of the Pu lishers.

bigoted rationalism and fanatic adherence of Western man to outer physical reality, and his overvaluation of the demonstrable objective world around him, which is the cause of much of his undoing." He added:

"One realizes that it is not we who are filled with spirit and soul, but rather the dark and despised people about us. They have so much of it that it overflows into the trees, rocks, rivers, lakes, birds, snakes and animals that surround them. The bushman makes gods out of all the animals around him; the Hottentots kneel to an insect, the praying mantis; the Bantu listens to the spirits of his ancestors in the noise of his cattle stirring in their kraals of thorn at night, made restive by the roar of the lion and the hyena's werewolf wailing; the Negro appeases and invokes the gods in endless fetishes and images of wood and clay. But he and all they are humble parts of life and at one with it, knowing that, in order to get through their tiny, trembling day, they are in constant need of support from a power greater than themselves. They all have their own ways of evoking this support—elaborate rituals, strict codes of behavior, colorful ceremonial evolved out of their experience of life—and their own social ethics in terms of which they are initiated into life and ushered out from it.

"They are poorer in almost every way than we and no more successful, perhaps, in these matters than we are. But in one great respect they are richer. Whatever happens to them, their lives are never lonely for lack of spirit nor do they find life wanting in meaning."

AS I see it, the subject matter of TOMORROW'S special issue is the Doubly Unknown. Unknown, to a decisive degree is Africa as such—the Africa above and beyond the easy clichés of non-African internalism. And doubly unknown are the mysteries of Africa's soul, its strong links to what it considers a supernatural world, its attachment to commanding paranormal forces that are part of its way of life. The challenge is not merely to comprehend Africa—but to do so with a dedication that is both searching and humble.

EILEEN J. GARRETT

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